Interview with John Edgar Williams

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JOHN EDGAR WILLIAMS

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Q: How did you decide to go in to Foreign Service and what prompted you?

WILLIAMS: When I was in High School I very much wanted to be a career military officer. I wanted to go to West Point. There were three in my high school class who were really keen to go to West Point. The other two guys made it and I didn't. My eyes were not good enough. The summer that I was seventeen I came up to Raleigh from Wilmington and I went to an eye doctor who gave me all kinds of exercises which were supposed to improve my eyes. My eye sight improved, but not enough. So, I could not make it to West Point because of my eyes. As soon as I was eighteen I enlisted in the army. They would have drafted me anyway, because it was just after World War II. World War II was over in September and I became eighteen in November. I went in the Army as soon as I could. I went to Officer Candidate School, became an officer in field artillery. I went to Japan. Al Haig and myself and a few other soldiers occupied Japan. While I was in Japan I was still thinking of the army as a career, because, after all, here I was — I had become an officer at the age of eighteen, which you could do according to the World War II rules which were still in effect then. But, the more I saw of the army, the more it became obvious to me that people who were not West Pointers were at a disadvantage and were going

to stay at a permanent disadvantage. Of course, there are some prominent exceptions that we all know about. I decided at the time I really enjoyed living in Japan. I just liked it. I can't explain it very well. It's just that I enjoyed meeting the Japanese people and talking to them. As a junior officer I was sent out on all kinds of little errands and missions out into the countryside that the more senior officers didn't want to be bothered with. Such as, for example, P.O.W. searches to see whether if there were any P.O.W.'s perhaps still around; graves registration of American Air Force people who had been shot down and taken prisoner or who had died in custody or whatever; and election observation. That last was a very interesting one, because shortly after I arrived, they had the first elections after the war, just for provincial and municipal officials, not for any national offices, not for the diet. This was in February and March of 1947. I headed a little team way down in southern Kyushu. We used to kid each other that we were so far south that the Japanese instead of saying “ohayo gozaimasu,” which means “good morning,” they would say “ohayo gozaimasu, you all.”

Q: How far from Tokyo was that?

WILLIAMS: Oh my gosh. In miles, I don't know if I can be very accurate. Something like eight hundred miles perhaps. It was an entire twenty-four hours on the train, because one of my little excursion jobs was taking to Tokyo groups of enlisted men who were going to be discharged and putting them on the ship to get them back to the United States. I did that several times. But, this election observation was just fascinating, because the Japanese had no experience of democratic elections. Of course, we had said that women were going to be allowed to vote. This apparently was resisted a little bit at some levels in Japan. One of the jobs that I was supposed to do was make sure that women were voting and that they understood that they had the right to vote regardless of what anybody said to them. So, I would show up with my team, which consisted of me, a young Hawaiian Nisei, second generation Japanese American, and the driver. That was my team. We would show up at the election places and the Japanese authorities didn't know how much Japanese we spoke or understood. My Hawaiian young man spoke fairly elementary

Japanese, but fairly fluently. I spoke just enough to sort of create the impression that I knew more than I really did. My pronunciation and accent were good. Anyway, we did make an impression by going around and making sure that people knew that we were looking at them. Maybe we weren't seeing everything we should have, but people knew that we were there and we were looking. I think the elections went off very well. In fact, I got a few votes for Governor of Kagoshima-Ken, the southern most province. They were told that they didn't have to vote for the people who were on the ballot. They could write in names. So, Lieutenant Williams got a few votes. Gee, there went my promising political career. I'm sorry, I'm going on at great length here, but the thing is, this is just to sort of underline the fact that I enjoyed living over there so much for all these reasons that I decided that perhaps the military was not the career that I was best suited for, but perhaps the Foreign Service was. So, from then on my education and everything I did was directed toward getting into the Foreign Service.

Q: It makes quite a bit of sense. I was just thinking about whayour driver was driving, what sort of vehicle? What did it look like.

WILLIAMS: A jeep. No, wait a minute, hang on, not a jeep. It was a Dodge three quarter ton. It was kind of like a jeep, but just bigger. You take a jeep and expand it. It was called a “Weapons Carrier.”

Q: What were the roads like or were there any?

WILLIAMS: Lousy. Oh sure, there were roads most of the places we wanted to go. I do remember once we took the wrong road and it turned out that it sort of dwindled off into a cow path and we had a heck of a time backing up getting that Dodge back down the side of the mountain to get to the right polling place. Everything over there at the time was just completely in shambles. It was utterly torn up.

Q: Say more about that, how, why, where?

WILLIAMS: Well, we bombed everything, you know. Down where I was in Northern Kyushu,, now there are several former cities which have been sort of lumped together which they now call Kita Kyushu which is North Kyushu. But we had bombed all of those towns and cities, because they had war production there. They had war production all over the place. Of course, in Tokyo, there were just so few buildings left and the famous Ginza was rows of shacks along the street which were stores and shops, but made out of scrap wood. The Japanese were slowly beginning to rebuild, but very slowly at the time. Of course, when I visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they were still utterly devastated, no rebuilding had begun that I could see.

Q: What was your thought when you first saw those cities?

WILLIAMS: Whew, boy, what a weapon. No wonder they surrendered. One interesting thing though; Nagasaki was the center of what Christianity there was in Japan, because Saint Francis Xavier who went there in the seventeenth century, maybe the sixteenth. I don't really know, I'm forgetting my history here. But, there was a large community of Christians living there who'd been living there for three hundred years. Unfortunately, the Mitsubishi Torpedo factory was right there near where they lived, with several other war plants. The bomb lit right in the middle and killed a great many Christians. Of course it was all a tragedy and I don't suppose we should mourn too much more for the Christians than for any other Japanese civilian. But nevertheless, it struck me at the time as a pity that the clouds had moved down over Niigata that day, because Niigata was, I understand, the primary target. Since the weather had moved in over the sea of Japan, our planes went to the secondary target, Nagasaki.

Q: I see. Remind me about the diameter, the vastness of both thosbomb sites. The area of greatest destruction.

WILLIAMS: I'm trying to recall. Hiroshima was very flat, right on the sea coast. Of course, Nagasaki was also on the coast. As the name implies, it was a cape, and there was a

river running down a valley. But there were hills. There were ranges of little hills there and they protected part of the city against the worst effects of the bomb blast. So, it was not as devastated as was Hiroshima was. But Hiroshima looked just absolutely flat, except for the ruins of the building that we always see in the photographs, standing there with the roof blown off and windows blown out. But, the building itself, the walls were still standing. But outside of that, everything else looked just flattened in the central part of the city, I would say at least a square mile. In Nagasaki it is harder to say, because there it was not just flat and the effects of the bomb were not evenly distributed in a sort of circular radius around ground zero. It went off over the valley and the effects traveled up and down the valley, but not across the little ranges of hills. You could see — well, my arm here is a factory chimney and now you see the top bending over like that, you could see the chimney bending way over. And factories, all you could see was the steel framework of the factories and that was about it. But, you know, it was interesting. There was one Japanese scientist who had planted a lot of plants right at ground zero. He was growing mostly root plants mostly and some rice and he had little plots here and there. I went and talked to him and he was just seeing what was the effect of the radiation or other effects of the bomb on plant growth. He told me he was getting terrific root growth, but he was not getting any grain on the rice.

Q: So, he did that after the bomb?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes, sure.

Q: Oh my goodness. That's an amazing story. It's amazing that yosaw that so relatively soon after the blast.

WILLIAMS: It was very interesting.

Q: So, you decided the Foreign Service made more sense to you thathe Army, so you extricated yourself from the Service?

WILLIAMS: Oh, I didn't have to work very hard to do that. The Army was down-sizing at the time. We were demobilizing. In fact, when I told you earlier that I went to O.C.S., that was in 1946 and they told us, “You're going to have an awful hard time getting through this, because we don't need that many artillery lieutenants now.” So, there was a terrific attrition rate, and afterwards for those of us who were serving on active duty, they were always saying, “Would anybody like to get out now?” Anyway, I could have stayed. I could have put in my application for Regular Army, but as I said, I didn't think that I would ever catch up with my West Point friends.

Q: I see. You had an interest, but you just figured you'd carve out another path? So, this path then, this journey into the Foreign Service began. How about the first posting? You told me about that, but actually getting into the Foreign Service, what was that like and your first posting?

WILLIAMS: Well, it was interesting, because at the time that I took the Foreign Service exam, I had just gotten back from New Zealand. After finishing my BA degree here at the University of North Carolina, I stayed in Graduate School for a year and then I got a Fulbright Scholarship to go and study in New Zealand at Victoria University in Wellington. So, I went down there and stayed for a bit over a year and studied; came back; and in 1953 I took the Foreign Service exam. But this was during the McCarthy period when the Department of State was just paralyzed. They weren't hiring anybody. You could take the exam, but they were telling us that it was going to be some indeterminate period time before they would be in a position to offer us employment. Anyway, I just took it for practice. I didn't think that I was going to pass, but to my surprise I passed the written and subsequently passed the oral. By the way, the written at that time was three and a half days, not one day like it is now.

Q: Roughly, all day?

WILLIAMS: All day, every day, three and a half days.

Q: From morning till night?

WILLIAMS: I don't remember the times, but it was a full day of exams.

Q: You know you had had three and a half days?

WILLIAMS: Yes! Anyway, I was back in Graduate School finishing up my Masters and beginning course work on a Doctorate. In June of '54 I finished up my Masters in Political Science, International Studies. I had decided I had better look for some other employment, specifically some job with the Government; any way at all to get to Washington. I thought getting to Washington would help me, you know. If I went to work there I would at least be there where the Foreign Service was, and I could keep an eye on things. So, I took some more exams including the one called Junior Management Assistant. It was for entry level executives. Anyway, I went to work for the Department of the Air Force in the Pentagon as a Management Assistant. I had been there only six months when one evening I got a call from somebody in the Department of State saying, “Would you like to go to London?” I said, “Would I like to go to London!” What happened was, the Ambassador in London was Winthrop Williams Aldrich of the Massachusetts Aldriches of the Chase National Bank. That was before it became Chase Manhattan. He was looking for a junior aide. He had a senior aide, but he needed a junior aide. So, another fellow and myself were two candidates. They said they were going to bring us both into the Foreign Service and then let the Ambassador interview us and see which one he wanted, then both of us were going to go to London in one capacity or another. So, the Ambassador chose me, and I became the Ambassador's junior aide there.

Q: Were you scared when you went for the interview?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: But, you knew you were going to get to London anyway, or hoped?

WILLIAMS: Well, yeah, unless the Ambassador told them that I don'want this fellow at all.

Q: What do you think helped you get the job?

WILLIAMS: You know, I really don't know. I can't think why the Ambassador chose me over the other fellow, but I kind of wish he hadn't, because the other fellow went into the economic section and that's where I later ended up, in the economic cone and I sort of wished that I had gotten an earlier start at it. Although, working for the Ambassador was very interesting in many ways. I don't think it really helped my career along that much as a first assignment.

Q: I see. So, that was London, what year?

WILLIAMS: Actually, I arrived in January of '55.

Q: What was it like when you got there? Did you think, oh my, thiis the Foreign Service?

WILLIAMS: Oh boy, yes. I'm not only in the Foreign Service, I'm athis great prestigious post of London.

Q: What about the Ambassador himself?

WILLIAMS: Well, you know the old saying, “de mortuis nilnisi bonum,” but he was kind of a stuffed shirt. Even though I was his Junior Aide, I didn't see an awful lot of him, because of his confidential work was done with his confidential aide, who was not a Foreign Service Officer. He had brought in to the Foreign Service as a Reserve Officer when Aldrich was appointed Ambassador. Ambassadors had a lot more leeway then than they do now. I'd see him every day, but I didn't sit down and have long talks with him or anything like that. I had a bit of a problem about that. A lot of people in the Embassy thought that, since I was in the Ambassador's office, that it would be a great thing to get me on their side on whatever little controversies they had going at the time. So, I had a lot of people pulling

and tugging at me and unfortunately, I think I fell for a couple of these things and sort of took sides, which I shouldn't have done.

Q: Who were these people?

WILLIAMS: The Consular Section wanted more space, or the Commercial Section wanted another position established. All kinds of just little bureaucratic things like that.

Q: What was the location or address? Where in London?

WILLIAMS: Grosvenor Square. The building that was our Embassy then is now the Canadian High Commission. Our new Embassy is across the square, where we had the old Consular Section in my time. They tore down a lot of the old eighteenth century houses over there and built the new Embassy, once we managed to buy all of that section of Grosvenor Square. It's a lovely location.

Q: So that was January '55 and people pulling and tugging and so asome point, the next step was?

WILLIAMS: The next step was —Q: Actually, I wanted to ask you that it wasn't that far, that long after the end of World War II, what was London like?

WILLIAMS: London still showed a lot of the devastation of the bombing and there were a lot of vacant lots with pieces of wall around and piles of rubble. One interesting thing that was struck me was this. I had kept my commission in the Army Reserve and every year I would go for two weeks to Germany to do my active duty training. I went to various places in Germany, both when I was in London and later when I was in Madrid. I went to Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Schweinfurt, Nuremberg, and other places. The Germans were far ahead of the British in rebuilding. It made me wonder what made the difference.

Q: How would one account for that?

WILLIAMS: I really don't know. Maybe the work ethic. I just have a feeling that maybe the Germans were harder workers and they had more of a feeling like, well, here's a task, let's get on with it. I don't know quite what to say about the British. It seems as though they worked awfully hard during the war, but I think there was sort of a let-down after the war in many ways, politically and the work ethic-wise. In fact, I recall at that time there was a Labor Member of Parliament who got a little annoyed at the practices that he saw of a gang working on the street near his house. So he would time them, from the time they got there in the morning and he would see how many people were working at any particular time of day, what time they went to lunch, what time they came back from lunch, what time they took their breaks and so on. Really, it was pretty shocking when he went public with this. It came out in a newspaper. They apparently would show up to work in a very leisurely way, not at the time they were supposed to, but maybe a half hour later. Then, they would go and do a little work then they would take their morning tea break, then they would take a long lunch period and then work a little more, then there would be an afternoon tea break and then they would all leave before the time they were supposed to leave. Well, the MP got annoyed at this, but when he went public, a great storm of criticism descended on him from his own party. He was a “traitor to the working class.” Oh boy! I could not imagine that anything like that would have occurred in Germany.

Q: That's interesting. I guess I'm thinking about Spain and abouthe next step. Any other earth-shaking developments in London?

WILLIAMS: Yes. Well, I only lasted for a year as the Ambassador's Aide, because an inspector came through. We have these inspections periodically. The first inspector that inspected me is now a retired Ambassador and lives down in Southern Pines, Findley Burns. I've reminded Findley of this, although I don't think he remembered it too clearly. He was the first inspector with whom I ever came in contact, and he asked me all kinds of questions about my job. How might it be improved or how might the efficiency of the office be improved?

I told him I thought the efficiency of the office could be improved by abolishing my job and distributing the duties among several other people whom I named.

Q: The fellow said, “How can we make this more efficient,” and syou said?

WILLIAMS: I said, “Abolish my job and redistribute the duties among other people.” When the word of this got back to the Ambassador he abolished me. Actually, I was sent over to the Consular section, where I did my apprenticeship as a Consular Officer for the following year.

Q: Where was the Consular section?

WILLIAMS: It was not in the main Embassy building, but across Grosvenor Square in one of the old homes. I think it was Lord and Lady Bailey's old home, actually. Anyway, it was a lovely old house. My desk was right in front of this great fireplace with a wonderful mantel, it was just terrific. Anyway, we had an awful lot of visa applicants. At first, I was in the visa part of the operation, non-immigrant visas; then for several months I did immigrant vistas; then I did protection and welfare of American citizens. People who had one kind of a problem or another were always wandering into the Embassy wanting us to solve their problems. Some of them really did have problems and others, well, they would have had problems anywhere. But this was all interesting too. It was all very interesting to me, because I gave visas to a lot of very interesting people.

Q: Any you want to name or think of or just types of people.

WILLIAMS: Well, most of them, the people I'm thinking of were entertainers or movie actors or actresses. Right now, names don't occur to me, but they were well known at the time. Among the people that showed up at my office when I was doing protection, welfare and notarials. Consuls are like notaries public. Bob Hope was among my notarials clients. I

do remember Fleur Cowles. She was the heiress of the Look Magazine publishing empire, the Cowles Publications. She was a character. Q: What did she look like or sound like?

WILLIAMS: Oh, she was quite a distinguished looking lady. I remember one remark she made. We were talking about various prominent people most of whom she knew quite well and I didn't know. Anyway, I don't remember why we were having this long conversation, but she talked about some gentleman of whom she said, “He's so well known, good Lord, why his who's who is seven inches long.” Then she said, “Oh, maybe I shouldn't put it like that.”

Q: Oh my goodness!

WILLIAMS: I met a lot of interesting people. I did that for a while, then I got word that they were going to transfer me to Madrid. By the way, I was then engaged to an English girl and I didn't want to leave London. But, they needed a Consular Officer in Madrid, and I was young and single and easily transferable, so I got transferred. This was in November of '56 so I didn't quite finish out my two full years. I was a couple of months short of my two years in London. I thought at least I was going to a place where I spoke the language. I had studied Spanish in high school and college. So, I drove down. I'd bought myself a new German station wagon, a Borgward. They don't make them anymore. So I piled all of my worldly goods and effects into the back of this Borgward station wagon and drove down to the coast, drove the car on to the ferry over to France and drove down through France. I had an uncle who lived in Paris at the time, so I stayed with him for several days. He was the head of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Experiment Station in Paris, an Entomologist. Anyway, I drove on down through France and saw a lot of lovely things.

Q: And the food?

WILLIAMS: Oh, the food. The oysters down around Bayonne were great, and of course, the wine, the Bordeaux. But, then I got to Irun, on the Spanish border. I thought, good, I was having a problem with French, because I'd studied some French, but not very much

and I really had a problem with speaking it. But I thought that on getting to the Spanish frontier, I would be able to communicate. The Spanish customs people said something to me that sounded like utter gibberish. I hardly understood anything. Anyway, I made it down to Madrid. I remember the first day. I got there in the late afternoon. I checked in at my hotel and rested for a while and I thought I'd go down to dinner. I got down to the dining room about nine o'clock and I thought, gee, I hope I'm not too late. There was nobody there. So I thought, I guess I am too late. I found somebody and said, “I realize I'm late, but is there some way I can get something to eat?” He said, “Ah se#or, we begin to serve at nine-thirty or ten.” So, that's the custom.

Q: Right. Absolutely, in Madrid. What place or part of the city dyou remember the restaurant or hotel?

WILLIAMS: It was down town and fairly close to the Embassy which was in Calle Serrano, which was just a block or so up from the Castellano, the main street of that part of Madrid. Of course, I only stayed in a hotel a few days until I could rent an apartment.

Q: What about your fiancee?

WILLIAMS: We were planning to get married in the early summer. She quite understood my transfer — British stiff upper lip and all that sort of thing you know.

Q: Was she from London, or countryside?

WILLIAMS: She was from London. I had been in Spain for about three months when I got my ring back in the mail. She had decided that she maybe didn't want to get married after all. Anyway, I quickly darted over to London (caught a ride on a military aircraft) to try and talk her out of it, but she was fairly adamant. She had decided that she really didn't want to get married now. Interestingly enough after I had been in Madrid about a year and a half, she changed her mind, and showed up in Madrid and wanted to put it all back together again. Well, by then, I was otherwise occupied.

Q: Well, I know the English do take time maybe, deliberating. That is a personal note. Not insignificant by any means, but did you help her get back on the —

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this, my Spanish girlfriend and I introduced her around in to Spanish circles. I think I made it as clear as I could that we weren't going to be able to put it back together and I heard she subsequently married a Spaniard. I do not know for sure, because I never spoke to her again after that. The Spaniard she supposedly married was an artist. Apparently, he was one of the people that she met through one of these contacts that we had made for her. That's all I know. She married a Spanish artist.

Q: That's very interesting. Who knows, you may have changed helife forever.

WILLIAMS: I may well have.

Q: These are personal details and they are important, but I'm thinking about political situation, I'm thinking about when you were heading down from the North, did you see evidence of Basque activity? Could you see a vast difference from Barcelona to Madrid?

WILLIAMS: No. I didn't go through Barcelona. I went right down King Alfonso XIII's old highway where he used to drive his Hispano-Suiza every couple of weeks, and make it from Madrid to San Sebastian in six hours. He was a wild man they said, Alfonso XIII. This was before he left the country in 1930. Anyway, I drove down. The road was still very much like it had been at that time and it took me eight hours from Irun to Madrid.

Q: Tell me about the road. Describe it.

WILLIAMS: Well, it was a two-lane blacktop. It wound over the Guaderrama Mountains, north of Madrid and south of Segovia. There were all kinds of small mountain ranges up there, but the Guaderrama was the biggest, and it was all hair-pins curves.

Q: No guard rails?

WILLIAMS: No, not that I can recall.

Q: Did you have a center line painted?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes, there was a center line, I believe, in some places, not all. Around the worst hair-pins. It was quite a road. I drove it many times. There was another road that I drove often which was the road to the Northwest, the Carretera de La Coruna. When driving back to Madrid late at night, I would sometimes find myself behind convoys of trucks that were bringing fresh seafood down to Madrid from La Coruna. The fishing boats would be out all day and then they would come in to the harbor at La Coruna in the evening. They would ice up all the seafood, fish and shell- fish, oysters, clams and all kinds of things. Then they would load them on these trucks. That fresh seafood would be on sale at five o'clock the next morning in the Madrid market. All the families would send their maids out to buy at that time in the morning to make sure they had fresh seafood. You could get stuck behind several of those trucks coming over the Guaderrama Mountains. It was not my idea of a lot of fun. Anyway, the roads were not very good. I could not discern many lingering after-effects, accept political, of the Civil War. I don't recall seeing any ruined buildings in or near Madrid, and I lived in the northwest corner of Madrid where there was a lot of fighting.

Q: You just didn't see any evidence of it?

WILLIAMS: I didn't see any evidence of it and there was no discernable Basque activity. The Basque terrorism had not started up at that time. There was, I gather, some long-standing feeling for Basque separatism, but there was no active movement, because Franco had really suppressed all active movements in opposition to his government. You could talk against the government as long as you didn't do it in public, you know. As long as it wasn't in the newspapers or on the radio or anything. You could tell jokes about Franco all you wanted, but you could not organize a movement.

Q: What about labor and politics? The labor situation, political situation?

WILLIAMS: Well, you see, there is a long story about the economic development of Spain and the responsibility of the United States for it. We did play a very important role. I was almost four years in Spain. I spent my first couple of years in the Consular section. I was the head of the visa operation there. Then, I moved over into the Economic and Commercial Section. At that time, our AID Mission was joined with the Embassy Economic Section. That is a very unusual arrangement. We had a joint AID Mission-Economic/ Commercial Section. Usually they are separate. I was in that for a while and I got a good chance to observe how we were actively helping the Spanish government to move itself into the modern economic era. We started off with the Agreement of 1952, the military base agreement where we agreed to give them economic and military aid in return for allowing us to set up several bases there. Rota the Naval Base in the South, and Torrejon near Madrid and, the big bomber base at Zaragoza. Torrejon was a fighter base. Anyway, that had been going on for several years. They were still under construction there. In fact, while I was there they were still constructing a pipeline from Rota on up through Madrid to Zaragoza for petroleum products for the bases.

Q: Remind me, how far was the Rota base from Madrid?

WILLIAMS: Oh, about three hundred miles.

Q: And then on to —

WILLIAMS: On to Zaragoza, another one hundred fifty, two hundred miles, something like that. The way pipelines go in this country it's not a long one, but there were right-of-way problems and all that stuff. So, there was some economic activity which had been directly generated by us, base-building, pipeline building and so on. The thing is, Spain was still an outcast. They were poison as far as the Europeans were concerned, because Franco was considered to be a leftover legacy of Hitler and Mussolini which in some respects was

true. Although, I must say, he was not as much of a puppet of Hitler and Mussolini as he has been made out to be. I recall an interesting incident that bears on that.

Q: I'd like to hear that.

WILLIAMS: There was a Spanish Marques named Merry del Val who told me, he had been a young man in the Foreign Ministry when he accompanied Franco to meet Hitler at the border at Irun in 1940. Apparently, one of the things that Hitler wanted in return for the aid he had given to Franco during the Civil War was Franco's permission to allow German troops to pass through Spain to attack Gibraltar. The Marques told me that he had been with Franco during the interview with Hitler. Hitler made his request and Franco said no. He didn't want to allow German troops to use Spain as an attack-base. That would bring Spain into the war, and Franco really didn't want to do that. Apparently, Hitler got angrier and angrier until he finally picked up a chair and hit it and broke it on the floor.

Q: At this meeting?

WILLIAMS: At this meeting, which apparently brought an end to the meeting. If Franco had allowed the Germans to go through and take Gibraltar, the war might have come out rather differently, because the entrance to the Mediterranean would have been blocked.

Q: Did this man personally tell you that?

WILLIAMS: Yes. The Marques de Merry del Val told me that he'd beethere personally, he'd seen it and heard it.

Q: Whoa! That's pretty powerful. WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: That's amazing. So, Franco was not necessarily the puppet?

WILLIAMS: No, he wasn't. But, he was very much his own man. He had gotten to where he was by fairly ruthless means. Two senior officers, generals senior to him in the Spanish

army, died under rather suspicious circumstances: General Sanjurjo and General Mola. One of them was in a plane crash and they could never quite figure out why the plane had crashed. I forget what happened to the other one. Anyway, I will say the Spanish owe Franco another debt, that is, the economic recovery plan with which we helped very much. We, the U.S. government, specifically the American Embassy there and to be more specific, the combined AID Mission/Economic-Commercial Section. At the time, I said the Spanish were poison as far as the Europeans were concerned. The Europeans hardly wanted to trade with Spain, much less make any agreements with them. They were beginning to set up what became the European Communities. They had already set up the Coal and Steel Community and they had signed the treaty of Rome in 1956. They were well on their way to creating a United Europe, and Spain was left out. Spain, obviously was not going to get very far economically with a closed economy which they had at the time. In fact, most countries had fairly closed economies, but Spain was worse than most. They had high tariff levels; they had a lot of government subsidies for different activities; they had no currency relationships, clearing arrangements or anything like that with other European countries. It was a closed economy. It was obvious to us that they had to break out of this if they were going to get anywhere as a modern country. Furthermore, if they were going to be our ally, we wanted them to be a strong country with a powerful economy. It was not just for their benefit it was for our benefit, too. But, the benefits overlapped to a great degree. So, we worked on a couple of Franco's most trusted Ministers. Interestingly, these were a couple of guys who were members of the Opus Dei. Do you know what the Oppus Dei is?

Q: No. You'll have to remind me. And do you remember the namealso by any chance?

WILLIAMS: I don't remember the names of these ministers. But one, I think, was the Minister of Commerce and Industry and the other was the Minister of Economy. The Opus Dei is a Catholic lay religious organization in which the members take vows very similar to priestly vows. It's a very closely held organization and I'm not sure really what the basic idea of it is, but I know the people involved are Catholic to the core, but international

Catholic. They're not provincial. They want to create a large Catholic community. In other words, these guys were interested not only in developing Spain economically, but seeing that Spain had good relations with their fellow Catholic countries, like Italy and France. I think this was part of the motivation behind their willingness to go that extra mile to bring Spain into the modern world economically. Anyway, we eventually had some help on this. There was a particular Frenchman, Jacques Rueff — I forget what his position was, but he had a very prominent position in the French government and later in the European Communities, and he helped a lot on this. We persuaded these ministers in turn to persuade Franco to adopt an economic stabilization plan to open the economy, to devalue the currency, to free the currency. In other words, get away from a pegged currency. If you're going to have free international trade you can't have a pegged currency at some particular value in relation to the dollar or gold. You must do these things and lower the tariffs and cut government subsidies to favored activities. In other words, they had to allow free market principles to work.

Q: What would have been some examples of government subsidies?

WILLIAMS: Public transportation was one of the big ones. Ship- building was another one. Automobile manufacture. These things had been considered to be important back during the Civil War and they just hung on. If you're going to have a free market economy you can't have a lot of government subsidies around. Anyway, they adopted a plan which would, over a period of time, put into effect economic laws and rules and regulations of a free market type. They did have a couple of very difficult years after this. This was done in 1959. I was no longer there after mid '60, but I understand they had a couple of fairly tough years in 1960 and 1961, but ever since then, the Spanish economy has just been zooming.

Q: That's very helpful and good. Going back to your involvement ithat. Tell a little bit more specifically about how that worked.

WILLIAMS: Well, actually my involvement personally was largely looking out for trade opportunities for American companies and doing analyses of different industries in Spain so that American businesses, on reading my analysis of the Spanish automotive industry, the ship building industry, the telecommunications industry, the electric power generation industry and so on could get an idea of where they might be able to fit in and sell some products to Spain. That was my main involvement.

Q: Other goods and services. I'm thinking of '75. I know Proctor and Gamble for instance had executive people in Madrid. But, other U.S. companies?

WILLIAMS: Very few American companies at that time had representatives in Madrid. Their representative in Italy or in France or somewhere where they would occasionally come and visit, you know. I do remember one particular incident when a Spanish businessman came to see me one day and said he was a shoe manufacturer. He said he had heard about a big shoe exhibition or trade fair in Chicago, and he was interested in going.

He asked if I could give him any information about it. So I did. I give him all the information he needed in order to apply to attend, and he went. I asked him to please call me again when he returned and let me know whether he had been able to sell any shoes over there. They made lovely shoes in Spain.

Q: Talking about the shoe manufacturer in Madrid who came to you and wanted information on the Trade Show in Chicago and you gave him the information.

WILLIAMS: I gave him the information and then, when he came back, he came to see me and he said, “Ah, Se#or Williams, it's a disaster. I've accepted orders for many thousands of pairs of shoes. I can't manufacture all of these in the time that I would have to do it to fulfill these orders.” I said, “What you need to do, I suggest, is get together with other small manufacturers and see if you can't distribute your orders around and maybe form a

consortium to fulfill these orders." I said, "I'll tell you, if you don't fulfill these orders now, you'll never get another order. So, you really need to do something, because otherwise, the Italians are going to wipe you out." Well, apparently he did get together a group of manufacturers, they did fulfill their orders. Of course, the Italian shoes are always more popular in the United States than the Spanish, but the Spanish got a good little chunk of the market. You see, trade has to be two-way. If the Spanish earn dollars, they can buy more from us.

Q: Where were they getting the raw materials mostly?

WILLIAMS: Native raw materials mostly. The leather from insidSpain. They had a lot of cows.

Q: I'm trying to think, would that have been mostly south Madrid oall over?

WILLIAMS: All over. Of course, the dairy industries are more in the northwest, in Galicia. But, I'm not sure if the dairy cow is the one that the leather comes from to make shoes. It's a fine leather. Of course, there were pigs too. In Spanish they've got about eight different words for "pig." So, there's a lot of them.

Q: So, you encouraged him just to get moving?

WILLIAMS: Yes. Again, trade is a two-way street. If you want to export you got to be able to import too. That's been my philosophy all along. Trade is a two way street.

Q: I was thinking back to 1956 that the Barcelona government had closed plants by Franco's orders. My question is, how much give and take was there, if any, between Madrid and Barcelona? Was Franco more concerned about things just in Madrid?

WILLIAMS: No. He was worried about things all over Spain, particularly Barcelona, because that was the major industrial and business city, as it had been since Carthaginian times. As you know, I'm sure the Barcelona was named for Hamilcar Barca, who was

Hannibal's father. It's an old city. It's been there a long time and it's going to be there a long time. But the thing is, the Catalans had never been very happy being ruled by Spaniards. During the Civil War, of course, they were on the side of the Republic, because they thought they would get more rights and autonomies from the Republican government than they would from the Franco government. They were right, too. But, the thing is, Barcelona and Cataluna, in general was a real hot-bed of republican sentiment, including long after the war. It was never in Franco's good graces and there was always a struggle there between the Catalans and the Castilians.

Q: Yeah. I can remember when we were there, that was in '75. People in Barcelona said, “Where are you going?” We said, “Well, we're going back to Madrid.” They said, “Well, why would you do that?” Something else, and this may not be about the American Embassy, but somewhere I read that women got property rights about 1957. I'm not sure what this note had to do with, what were women like, just an ordinary woman in Spain, 1956-57? I know that's a generalization.

WILLIAMS: Yes, it is a generalization and I really don't remember about the property rights. But, women were very much under the thumbs of their husbands. I do remember that married women were very faithful to their husbands. Also, there was National Service for women, as well as men, on reaching eighteen or nineteen. It was social service for women, military for men. That did a lot of good.

Q: And the extended family with strong generations stayed in onhousehold?

WILLIAMS: Yes, indeed. Particularly in the small towns in the villages and countryside, a woman who was widowed never married again. She always wore black from then on. She was always introduced as “La Viuda de Lopez” (for example), meaning “the widow of Lopez.”

Q: That was her identity?

WILLIAMS: Yes. I would be surprised to learn that women haacquired modern property rights in 1957.

Q: I'm not sure what this note was. I will have to do some more homework, because even in the United States, married women, even as late as the 1970's had to have permission of their husbands to sign a contract.

WILLIAMS: Yes. Well, women in Spain certainly had to have permission from their husbands to do anything, for example, to immigrate. During my two years as Chief of the Visa Section, a woman might come in and want to immigrate to the United States. She would not be able to get a Spanish passport unless her husband had agreed to it and signed some document saying that he gave his wife permission to get a passport. Of course, if she had a passport, we, the Embassy, did not require that a woman have permission from her husband to get a Visa. But, of course, we had to require that she have a passport.

Q: So, she had to fulfill the rules from both countries? WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: Alright. Thinking more about the unusual arrangement, the economic. You said that wasn't usually the case, economic section tied in with the —

WILLIAMS: With the AID Mission.

Q: Tell me again, it was just not the case in other Europeacountries?

WILLIAMS: No. Of course, earlier, we had the Marshall Plan, what they called Point Four under Truman. These were various other ancestors of the present AID program. Usually, as I said, they were a separate office within or attached to the Embassy. Not necessarily in the Embassy building, but attached to the Embassy. It was rather rare for this to be a joint Embassy AID Mission setup.

Q: Also, what about strike, miners, mining? Tell me about that.

WILLIAMS: Oh. Let me put it like this. The miners were a thorn in the flesh of most Spanish governments for the previous hundred years, especially back in the early 30's. The miners strike up around Oviedo, got to be very serious.

Q: And what were they mining?

WILLIAMS: Mostly coal mining in the North. There were some iron ore up there too. It was centered around Oviedo. The miners were apparently were the most militant of the unions, in the time preceding the establishment of the Republic in 1930 and during the Republic. Although, they were nominally allies of the Republic, if the Republican Government in Madrid didn't give them everything they wanted they would go on strike at the drop of a miner's hat. But, of course there was no striking during Franco's regime. Any strikes would be ruthlessly suppressed.

Q: How ruthlessly?

WILLIAMS: He would send in the Guardia Civil, the civil guard, and possibly shoot a few people. I don't recall any specific incidents. I may be maligning them, I'm not sure that they actually did shoot anybody. I'm not sure that any of the strikes or any attempts to strike got that far under Franco.

Q: But, just great fear?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: I was aware of the presence of soldiers even in '75 and at banks and other places. I mean, I felt very safe walking the streets late at night.

WILLIAMS: Oh, you could feel safe.

Q: I felt very safe. Much safer than the United States.

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure if I mentioned to you before about the one incident that happened while I was there involving crime and punishment. A couple of guys killed an Army Paymaster and robbed the payroll. This Army officer was taking the payroll to his regiment, and these two guys held him up and killed him. Within 72 hours, they had been caught, charged, tried, convicted, appealed, appeal denied, and executed.

Q: Within 72 hours. Ah!

WILLIAMS: That was the way things went at the time. There was no doubt that they were the ones that did it. There was just no doubt at all. This was the reason why people felt safe walking the streets at that time.

Q: Where was that?

WILLIAMS: I forget where in Spain it was. I'm not sure if it was in the Madrid area or whether it was around Segovia or Avila. I'm just not sure.

Q: Would that have been reported in the newspaper? How would yopeople have gotten word of that?

WILLIAMS: I really don't know. I may have well gotten the word of it through some Army officers. I had a lot of groups of friends there. I had one group of friends who were Army officers. I had another group of friends who were artists, painters and another group of friends who were theater people. I guess mixed in with those were people from the university. So, I may well have gotten it from some of my Army officer friends. I used to love to give parties and get these groups together.

Q: I'd like to hear more about that. I'm intrigued about that.Tell me about the groups.

WILLIAMS: Oh well. I had several girlfriends at the time in Spain. One of the girlfriends was in to theater work. She wasn't herself an actress, but she was from a sort of formerly well-to-do Spanish family. Her father had been a governor of several provinces, a civil governor under the Republic. So, she and her father had gone into exile after the fall of the Republic. She spent several years in Mexico, and then came back, because she had an uncle on the other side who was a senior judge under the Franco regime. Anyway, she was well connected all over, but especially in the theater, so that's where my theater group of friends came from. I had another girlfriend who was a painter. I met a lot of painters. We were at a party one night at the studio of a friend who was a painter. Everybody had a little too much to drink, I guess, and I said, “I really do like that pretty painting over there. How much do you want for it?” He gave me some ridiculously low price and I said, “Sure, I'm going to take it with me.” And, he said, “Fine. I can paint another one that would accompany it if you want me to.” Well, I don't think I ever actually got him to do that. But, I love the painting, which is hanging upstairs. It's a painting of a ship in a harbor up there, the harbor of Gijon. Anyway, that was Pepe Cousino, my friend the painter. There were a bunch of real art-crafty types. Then, my Army officer friends. They were all Francophiles to the death. I had one particularly good friend, a Colonel, who used to take me to the bull-fights. He had been a widower for several years. He had two permanent seats at the Madrid bull-ring.

Q: Sun or shade? Not that it matters.

WILLIAMS: It was actually shade, sombra. So he would invite friends, including me, quite often. I learned so much about bull-fighting from that guy. Then, some of my other Army officer friends were members of a club which I joined called Cacerias Militares a Calallo. The Military Horseback Hunt Club. I didn't hunt on horseback. Actually, they didn't hunt very much either. They would take some hares out and let them go and then chase them with greyhounds on horseback. The “galgos de campo,” like greyhounds. They were beautiful dogs. We would spend many Sundays out there. I would sit up there at the club

house with one of my girlfriends and some of my Army officer friends and their wives and/or girlfriends and watch the hunt progressing across the land, the territory in front of us. It was really nice.

Q: Where was that location?

WILLIAMS: It was about fifteen miles southwest of Madrid. I was a member also of the Military Officers Club downtown. There, I did a lot of fencing. I had some good friends who were fencers. I used to be on the University of North Carolina Fencing Team. I can prove it, I can show you in my college annual.

Q: I believe you.

WILLIAMS: So, I would go to this club. The Fencing Master was an old Olympic champion. We did a lot of fencing there. Anyway, I had really good friends there and I enjoyed it.

Q: I'm amazed about the different groups of friends. How were you thought of as an American diplomat? What did people think of you and how did that happen?

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this. If you were a diplomat at that time in Spain and this still applies most places, you were automatically a member of the upper class. I mean the upper class! And you were thought of as such, even though your background, back in your home country, might not have been upper class at all. Well, heck, I'm a North Carolina small-town boy, but nobody there really held that against me. A diplomat was accepted. We were offered memberships in clubs. I joined several, including the Club Tiro de Pichon, the Pigeon Shooting Club. Nowadays, people get shocked when I tell them about that. “You mean you actually shot live pigeons?” “Yeah, sure did.” Then, we would take them home with us and cook them. Actually, they were more like doves.

Q: Broil them or braise them, whatever?

WILLIAMS: Broil them. Anyway, they accepted me as an equal. In Spanish, as I'm sure you know, there's a formal form of address and a familiar form of address. Well, between people of the upper class, you very soon, I mean very quickly, get into the familiar form of address, “tutear.” They say “tu” instead of “usted,” which is very difficult for people who have only studied Spanish and never lived in a Spanish speaking country. One of my oldest and dearest friends is a teacher of Spanish down at Georgia State. I still cannot get her to consistently say “tu” when she's talking to me. She always says “usted.” That's just the way she was taught and some teacher told her that that's the way you do it. It's not. You have to be very careful in listening to the way people are talking to you so that as soon as somebody starts using the familiar form of address to you, you can immediately reciprocate, because if you don't, you have lost your opportunity. You are considered to be — well, you're with-drawn, you're distant.

Q: Her country of origin, her native country? The friend in Georgia?

WILLIAMS: Her country of origin is Georgia. I don't mean Soviet Georgia either. Where Shalikashvili's ancestors came from. You know, General Shalikashvili.

Q: So you did move in those circles. Tell me a little bit more about university people and what was the university's situation in the 50's or 60's?

WILLIAMS: One of the university's situations was that they were held on a very tight rein. There was very little of what we would think of as academic freedom, that is, freedom of inquiry or freedom to teach alternate views of history. Some of my friends who were at the university were telling me there was a Francoist view of almost everything from the beginning of the 19th century through the middle of the 20th century. You could teach different views of what happened back in the 19th century or earlier, but when you got up in to the 20th century you started having to be very careful. There weren't many good academics. Salvador de Madaviaga left. Unamuno went nuts. But let me add something to that. Arts and sciences just didn't enter in to that. There was nothing of the kind of the

thing that they had in the Soviet Union, where science had to be politically correct. Well, I say the Soviet Union, maybe even here now in many universities. There was nothing of that. Arts and sciences were taught like one would expect them to be taught.

Q: I'm thinking also of music and drama and plays.

WILLIAMS: Now drama was something else. Playwrights were alwaytrying to sneak things in to their writings.

Q: You mentioned someone specific?

WILLIAMS: Luca de Tena, I believe was the main one. By the way, Le came from a very influential family, and therefore had some protection. I think some of his relatives were prominent newspaper publishers. He would come out with plays which had little allusions in them. This was just beginning the late 50's. There were allusions to — things that people could interpret as applying to the present even though, in the play, they applied to the past. They were in costumes from the 18th century. So, you could say this is the 18th century it has nothing to do with what's happening today. But, they did sneak in a few political criticisms. I learned about this from my friends in the theater.

Q: I'm thinking about the places where these productions were actually held? Who came to the plays? Who would come to the theater? The more privileged or everybody? How would that compare to the United States?

WILLIAMS: The middle and upper classes went to the theater. The lower classes didn't. There was one incident that I think is worth telling about, because it gives you an idea of what life was like for artistically-inclined people under the Franco regime. My girlfriend who was a painter asked me one time if I would like to go to Segovia with her to attend a meeting to honor some anniversary of the writer, Antonio Machado. There were two poets, Manuel Machado and Antonio Machado. This was Antonio, who had apparently lived and worked in Segovia. I'm not all that familiar with Machado's work, frankly. My

favorite poet in Spanish is Federico Garcia Lores. Anyway, we went to Segovia, to the place where Machado had lived and worked. It was an old 19th century apartment house. Not all that old considering that you got a lot of 16th and 17th century houses in Segovia. It was an apartment house several stories high built around a little internal court-yard a fairly narrow carriage entrance from the street going back into the court-yard. Many people were gathered in the court-yard to hear a reading of Machado's work. There was an official government celebration going on at the same time in honor of this poet in Sovia, which was where he was born. This meeting was sort of in competition with the official government sponsored commemorative. Anyway, there were a whole lot of people in the court-yard there, including my girlfriend and I. They were reading some of Machado's works and talking about the freedom to write and so on. Some plain-clothes policemen were seen filtering through the crowd. This was noticed by some of the people, including the young man who was on the platform reciting, talking or whatever. So, somebody shouted in the crowd, or maybe it was the young man on the stage, I'm not sure. But, somebody shouted, “Los Fascistas a Soria!” (”Let the Fascists go to Soria.”) With that, all these plain-clothes men then tried to converge on the fellow on the platform, obviously intending to arrest him, but he got down and got away. I said to my girlfriend, “Look, let's get the hell out of here, because I'm afraid that this is going to turn into something that I would not want to have the American Embassy involved in.” I might get declared “persona non grata,” might get kicked out of Spain. Anyway, we sneaked out and got away.

Q: Did you learn whether he might have been arrested or not?

WILLIAMS: They did arrest some people, but they let them go.

Q: Would those plain-clothes men have been local people?

WILLIAMS: I don't know. They might well have been — they would have been people operating under the Ministry of Interior from Madrid, but they might have been stationed locally. They have delegations of the Ministry of the Interior in all cities all over Spain.

Q: Would people have known who might have been spying or concerned? How much suspicion was there?

WILLIAMS: A lot of suspicion. Like I say, these people were spotted by the crowd when they came in and started walking towards the platform. They weren't shoving and pushing, they were just sort of working their way up toward the front.

Q: Would this have been day, afternoon, evening?

WILLIAMS: This was afternoon.

Q: So they shouted out?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, the shout really triggered it. That was fun.

Q: Were you going by car? How did you get back?

WILLIAMS: Yes. We had driven up in my Mercedes.

Q: Oh my goodness. What size of engine of car?

WILLIAMS: It was a 220-S; in other words, a 2.2 liter engine.

Q: I remember seeing the government cars there in '75. It seems tme that those black cars were Dodges.

WILLIAMS: It was a 4-door sedan, black, a lovely car. I ordered it from Germany. And, when I left Spain, I ordered a Mercedes-Benz sports car which I went and picked up at the factory. After I left Spain, I went to do my two weeks Army training in Germany and picked up my sports car during that time. I drove it down to Naples and put it on a ship to New York. The same ship I sailed on. I forget whether it was the “Independence” or the “Constitution.”

Q: What color was it?

WILLIAMS: Carolina blue.

Q: Oh my goodness. They make Carolina blue Mercedes?

WILLIAMS: Well, I told them I wanted one. At the time you could order it in just about any color you wanted. There was a wide variety of colors.

Q: Did they have special people to mix the paint?

WILLIAMS: Well, I don't know, but it came out Carolina blue.

Q: That's neat. Tell me about other people in the Diplomatic Corps, your friends. It seems that it was a great help that you knew a lot of people from Madrid. What about other people in the Corps, people you worked with up there in the hierarchy?

WILLIAMS: Well, we had the hierarchy and the lower-archy.

Q: Whatever.

WILLIAMS: Well, we had Spanish employees besides the Americans in the Embassy. I supervised a number of Spanish employees and several Americans in both my capacities. When I was Chief of the Visa Section and then later when I went in to the Economic-Commercial Section. One of my employees in the Economic-Commercial Section was a Spanish Count. The Count of Casa Flores. He was a young man. Let me put it like this: he was not the brightest young man around, but when I needed to establish a contact with some Spanish company, corporation or organization, I would send out the Count of Casa Flores first, and he would go and present his card. He would always be received immediately by the Chief Executive Officer and would give them an explanation as to why

Mr. Williams from the Embassy wanted to come and see them. They would immediately agree. He was a great door-opener, let me tell you.

Q: And he didn't say anything terribly embarrassing; the title gohim in and got you in?

WILLIAMS: The title got him in and got me in, yes indeed.

Q: Say more about the class structure. I've got two questions morabout the Diplomatic Corps and jobs, chores, goals or every-day life?

WILLIAMS: Well, I was not so much caught up in to the active social life of the Embassy people as a lot of people were, because more of my life was out in the Spanish community. I was not married.

Q: That's what I was thinking. That gave you more of an advantagin many ways.

WILLIAMS: That doesn't mean that I didn't get invited to parties or didn't invite other Americans to my parties, I did, because I wanted to get a good mix, particularly the Ambassador's parties. The Ambassador would invite a lot of people, particularly the single members of his staff to mix at the big receptions and to talk to people. I told you earlier that when I first arrived there that my Spanish was totally inadequate, but after about three months my fluency begin to improve. After a year or so I was pretty fluent. So, I would go to the Ambassador's parties as a mixer. I met a lot of interesting people that way too. A lot of people including Christopher Columbus. Does that name ring a bell? Cristobal Colon, actually, the descendant of the original. Anyway, as far as relations with the other Embassy people, we had good relations. I remember there was one member of our Embassy staff who was the CIA Station Chief at the time was Archibald Roosevelt. He was the grandson of Teddy Roosevelt. His wife's name was, well, I can't remember her real first name but she was known as Lucky. She later became Chief of Protocol in the Department of State. Lucky Roosevelt. She was from Tennessee. She was from Lebanese parents and she looked as Lebanese as you can get, but she had a very thick Tennessee

accent. You think of accents like that as being more from Georgia, but she had a real good Southern accent.

Q: That would be different.

WILLIAMS: They were a nice couple.

Q: How was her Spanish?

WILLIAMS: Reasonable as I recall. Not terribly good, but reasonable.

Q: Southern accent Spanish?

WILLIAMS: Yes. Anyway, we had an heir of the Dodge family there too, as I recall. The General Motors Dodge. We had somebody from one of the big cereal families, not Kellogg, but equally well known.

Q: General Mills?

WILLIAMS: I can't think of his name. The name was well known, but I can't think of it right now. Darn it, there goes my memory. Anyway, we had a good group of people at the Embassy at the time. Ambassador Lodge was a very socially minded person.

Q: How?

WILLIAMS: He was an old politician, aside from being an old movie actor. He went in the Navy in World War II and abandoned his movie career. He came out as a Commander, and then went into politics in Connecticut. He was elected to the House of Representatives, along with other fairly well known people, like Richard Nixon and John F. Kennedy. Anyway, he was an intensely political, social type of person. He loved to meet people. He would shake hands and talk to people. He spoke excellent Spanish, excellent French, and pretty good Italian. His wife was an American — I think she was an American-

born Italian. Some of her brothers and sisters were born in Italy, but I think she was one of the American-born ones, and had been raised going back and forth from Italy to the United States. A high class Italian family you know. Francesca Braggiotti, one of her brothers, Chad, was a career Foreign Service Officer. Anyway, he would give lots of parties and all kinds of people would come, of course. Ministers of the government, admirals, generals, rectors of universities, artists, movie actors, the whole works. You might meet anybody at one of their parties. And their dinners something else! We had protocol problems with some of the dinners because of the nobility.

Q: Tell me about that.

WILLIAMS: Well, there were different grades of nobility. You have to make sure that you are seating them properly and you have to remember that, when you get below the Duke level you go down to Marques and Count (conde) and Vizconde and Baron. Some of these are Grandees of Spain and some are not. Being a Grandee of Spain is special. All Dukes are Grandees of Spain, but not all of the rest of nobility are grandees of Spain. Now a Marques would normally out-rank a Count. But a Count who is a Grandee of Spain would out-rank a Marques who is not a Grandee. So, you had these complications at the dinner-table.

Q: Who made those final decisions on the protocol?

WILLIAMS: Well, sometimes I would, because the Ambassador recruited me as a part-time aide and assistant. We just got along well and he would take me with him on trips. For example, he would tell my boss to liberate me for about six weeks each summer to accompany him to Sebastian, because the government would move; Franco and his ministers would move to Sebastian for the better climate in the summer. Too damn hot in Madrid. So the Diplomatic Corps would have to go there to be near the government. This was always after July 18th, which was the anniversary of the Franco uprising or rebellion in 1936. For six weeks after that, everybody would be in San-Sebastian, and I would go

up there with the Ambassador. Then, the Ambassador came to rely on me for protocol matters and I would frequently have to draw up seating arrangements for dinners. I would often call up the protocol people at the Foreign Ministry to get help. I didn't want to goof and have the Ambassador lose confidence in me.

Q: Were there more winter parties or summer parties or just all yearound?

WILLIAMS: Well, all year round really, except in the summer. Well, he would usually have one big party in San-Sebastian during the summer. They rented a house near the beach up there and sometimes invited people to beach picnics. But they would entertain all year round in Madrid.

Q: So, you called in reinforcements sometimes on this protocobusiness?

WILLIAMS: Oh, sure. Protocol and general decorum were very important. I mentioned my British girlfriend (ex-fiancee) who showed up after sending me the ring back. Anyway, the first Sunday she was there she wanted to go to church so I took her to church. She was wearing what she would have worn to church in England. It was a summery day and she had a nice dress on with no sleeves, practically. As a good Catholic, which she was, she had a little thing on her head, but they would not let her in without covering her arms. In Spain, they had no Second Amendment. There was no right to bare arms. (Excuse my propensity for punning). I thought that was interesting, because the government was closely interlocked in many ways with the Catholic church.

Q: Yes. I felt that was so even in the 70's. I was aware of the British, the Church of England was maybe allowed to have a church building there. Were they there in your time?

WILLIAMS: There was a Church of England there.

Q: But, as I understood there was not that relaxation for otheProtestant groups.

WILLIAMS: No. I'm not sure that they were forbidden or whether it was just there weren't enough people there of other Protestant denominations to establish a church. I'm a Presbyterian and I doubt if there were enough Presbyterians there to have a church. At the time, this was before the big Mormon campaign had started, or the Seventh Day Adventist and all those. I was just trying to recall whether there were any active Jewish synagogues. I don't recall really. That question suddenly popped into my mind and I can't answer it.

Q: I felt so aware of the Catholic presence and that it was vermuch tied in to government.

WILLIAMS: There is the old synagogue down in Toledo of course, buI'm not sure whether that's active or not.

Q: I have a feeling it's more of a tourist attraction. I wasn't there, but I have a feeling it was more tourist than anything else, but I wouldn't know. Somewhere in my notes I put that a Baptist leader was arrested, but I don't know what that was about.

WILLIAMS: I don't recall anything about that from my time.

Q: In a way, I guess the roles of women were much more set.

WILLIAMS: You recall that I mentioned National Service for women. At that time, there was a universal National Service. The young men went into the military service for a couple of years.

Q: In the 1950's? The time you were there?

WILLIAMS: Yes. In the 1950's. This went back at least to the 1940's, perhaps earlier, but I think it had been installed by the Franco regime. Also, for young women and girls out of high school there was a National Service obligation. They all went into it. They couldn't get out of it. Just being from a good family didn't mean you got out of it. The eighteen, nineteen, twenty old girls from Madrid would often go out to some small town

in the provinces. It was kind of like the Domestic Peace Corps. These girls would go out there and they would teach these village and country and provincial girls some of the things that they knew about as young city women. These were things that were traditional women skills like sewing and mending and cooking and nutrition and things of that kind. They would, in turn, learn some rural skills. I thought it was interesting that they had this universal service, and girls and women were included. It got these girls from Madrid and Barcelona and Bilbao out into smaller places where they probably would have never gone to spend any time. It got some of the girls from the small places into the cities. I think it helped promote a more unified Spanish society, because Spain has always been chopped up into different ethnic and linguistic groups, by region. The people from Cataluna, of course, were the main separatists; the Basques are separatists, the Andalusians at times have been separatists, the Galicians have been separatists. Many people feel they are, for example, more Galician or Andalusian than Spaniards. I think this universal service did an awful lot to break down this old provincialism in Spain and I think this was one of the good legacies of the Franco Regime. I'm not sure, but I don't think they have National Service for women any more.

Q: That was for how long?

WILLIAMS: I think for women it was a year. I think for men it watwo years.

Q: But even young women from privileged families had to do this?

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes indeed!

Q: Would they just take a whole year out of schooling?

WILLIAMS: I think this was considered a part of their schooling. believe it was a solid year and not broken up into summers.

Q: I can remember you were talking about life in the provinces. I was aware that women there, even from very poor families would have extremely well dressed children. I can remember their white socks on very dusty roads.

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. The children. The care and attention that was lavished on their children was just really something to see. They really did take care of their kids.

Q: What I would like to do is maybe pick it up another time. Talk some more. We haven't even begun to scratch the surface on Spain, but when you were leaving there, what did you think would happen in the country? What was the feeling that you had?

WILLIAMS: I was very optimistic and I believe my optimism was justified by later events. I thought that our economic plan which we had persuaded the Spanish government to adopt was going to have the effects that we predicted for it. Indeed it did later have those effects. As I mentioned, this came after an initial period of difficulty. But I was very optimistic, because down the road we could see the end of the Franco period had to come at some point. I don't think anybody at that time quite knew how this was going to play out. The way it actually did play out is another of Franco's great legacies to the Spanish people: the King, Juan Carlos. He educated this young man. He made sure that this young man got an education that would fit him to be the King, because Franco was determined not to permit the so-called legitimate heir to the throne, Don Juan to return as King, and indeed he was right. Don Juan would have been a disaster as King. Don Juan was a dinosaur. You know, you talk about right wing troglodytes, he is an original. But he was the legitimate heir as the eldest living and competent son of King Alfonso XIII. It took a lot of doing for Franco to get him to give up his right to the succession in order to put Don Juan Carlos in as King. I think we have seen that Don Juan Carlos has done a really excellent job. As you will recall, there was sort of a — well, you can't hardly call it a revolt, but several Civil Guard officers went into the Parliament Chambers and started shooting into the ceiling and all of the Parliamentarians dodged under their desks except Calvosotelo. They were trying to start an armed uprising against a government they considered far too liberal. They had

thought apparently that the King would go along with them and endorse it. But, he said, “No, stop. We will not have any of this.” This of course was after Franco's death that we are talking about. But, the few officers who were in on this were arrested and charged. I don't think that anything bad happened to them, but the King immediately let it be known where he stood on this kind of thing. I think the Spanish people owe Franco a lot for the King and the economic plan.

Q: How important was the Foreign Service? How critical was American Embassy life in that effort? So what?

WILLIAMS: Well, again I think that John Davis Lodge had established wide-spread, and excellent contacts among the Spanish people. While most of the contacts and friendships were with people in the middle and upper classes, he would go out to little places too. I accompanied him on a number of these trips out into the lesser little towns and cities. I remember our visit to Cuenca and down to Granada and all kinds of places. He would shake hands with little guys. The man on the street, the shop-keepers and everyone, and they all would go away thinking, “Ah, we've shaken the hand of the American Ambassador.” So, I think the fact that he established such popularity for himself and for the United States helped a lot in this effort to convince the Spaniards to come out of their shell and to enter the modern world, specifically to be our allies and be Europeans. We were not trying to bring them over to just be U.S. allies to the exclusion of the Europeans, we wanted them to be Europeans and allies.

Q: But to think about their own culture and respect that?

WILLIAMS: Yes, and also think about their relationship with the United States in the background. As Americans, we were always considering what is in the best interest of the United States! What is in our shared interest? I think we generally came to the conclusion that our interests were so much overlapping that we could really almost say that what was in the best interests of the United States was usually in the best interests of Spain.

Q: It seems that would take some doing, because some of thosvillage do seem quite remote and quite far from Madrid.

WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: Maybe not that far geographically, but worlds apart, it seemed to me. Tell me about the trip to Cuenca.

WILLIAMS: It's a lovely little town. While we were there, they were having part of their Easter celebration. One of the parts of it was a parade of penitents. Cuenca, as you know, is on a steep bluff overlooking the river Jucar. They were filing up this steep path up into the central city from down below and they were all wearing what we think of as Ku Klux robes. Those white robes with red crosses on them and these pointy tops over their heads. You would have thought it was a Ku Klux Klan gathering, but that's what the Catholic penitents wear, or they did at that time. Of course, nowadays we are so inclusive we don't want to recognize there's any such thing as a sin, it's just an alternative life-style or whatever and there's nothing to be penitent for. But, at that time there were real penitents. Some of them were carrying big crosses on their backs. That reminds me that one time in Barcelona I saw a similar kind of parade. There was a woman who was walking on her tip toes, barefoot, carrying a heavy cross on her back. Gosh!

Q: That's heavy duty seeking for forgiveness, big time.

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

Q: So, the procession was just winding up to Cuenca.

WILLIAMS: Yes. I remember that night, there was a sort of a little electrical fire alarm in the hotel. Apparently, there was a short circuit or something and there was a lot of smoke, but not very much fire. The Ambassador and his wife and I, we all had to evacuate our rooms and stand out in the street for awhile.

Q: What was that like? Did you have much warning?

WILLIAMS: Well, we were all in bed and there was no warning, just that we smelled smoke and somebody came around and knocked on our door and said, “There seems to be some problem here,” so we got out. But it didn't last for very long, because nothing was really on fire, it was just some wires. It was an ancient hotel. I mean it was really an old monastery converted into a hotel about the sixteenth century or something like that.

Q: So you were there when, 19 —?

WILLIAMS: This would have been '57 or '58 I think.

Q: About mid way into your term, right?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right.

Q: What was Lodges personality like?

WILLIAMS: Oh, he was very outgoing and ebullient and sometimes a bit haughty, but this didn't interfere with being real friendly to people. Not friendly in a back-slapping kind of way. He wasn't a back-slapping politician, he was a hand-shaking politician and there is a difference there. He was just a very open kind of guy. Most of my fellow Foreign Service Officers didn't like him, but he and I got along just great.

Q: Why didn't they like him?

WILLIAMS: I really don't know. Maybe they felt he was too much a politician. At that time and even today, there still is some lingering feeling against politically appointed Ambassadors among career officers. Every career officer will accept the fact that there are politically appointed Ambassadors and admit that they include some very good people.

But, you can tell sort of in the background that they really think that a career man would probably do a better job.

Q: I understand what you are saying. Yes, there could have been that feeling.

WILLIAMS: This was particularly true back in the Department of State.

Q: Let's talk about rank in the Foreign Service.

WILLIAMS: Well, the Foreign Service has different sets of ranks, depending whether you are stationed at an Embassy or in the Department of State. Now of course, every Foreign Service Officer has a personal rank. It is, in a way, like military ranks, but not quite. What I think you're more interested in is probably in an Embassy abroad. Nowadays, all of our Foreign Service principal posts in independent countries are Embassies. We use to have some Legations, but we no longer have these, because some countries got offended when we would only have a Legation rather than an Embassy in that country. It used to be that an Ambassador was in charge of an Embassy and a Minister was in charge of a Legation. But the Ambassador Extraordinary is the top man at an Embassy in a national capital. Under him, if it's a fairly big place, there would be a Minister who is the Deputy Chief of Mission. The Deputy Chief of Mission might have a different title. He might have the title of Minister, he might have the title of Counselor, or, in some small places he might even have the title of First Secretary, but he is the Deputy Chief of Mission and that's the job title, not a diplomatic title. These diplomatic titles came from the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and they were all laid out very carefully. So, under the Ambassador in that big Embassy there is a Minister. In those big Embassies there are several Counselors. In a small Embassy, you might have only one Counselor and he would be the Deputy Chief of Mission. At the big Embassies, there would be a Counselor in charge of each major section of the Embassy. For example in Ottawa, I was the Counselor for Commercial Affairs, in charge of all commercial activities. Then, below the Counselor rank, there are First Secretaries, Second Secretaries and Third Secretaries. Then, there are also Attaches. They might

come at any place in the hierarchy. Technically, according to the Congress of Vienna they are not part of the diplomatic hierarchy, but they are, as the name implies, “attached.” But, in our system you might have an agricultural attache, a commercial attache, a civil air attache, a drug attache, and others. There has been a great process of rank inflation in recent years. A friend of mine, for example, was until recently the Agricultural Minister in London. That Embassy has not just one Minister, but several Ministers. But this is unusual. It's only at the very biggest Embassies. Then, also at an Embassy you will have a Consular Section. The Consular ranks are different. Most career Foreign Service officers are given both a diplomatic commission and a Consular commission. When I first entered the Service I was given a commission as a Secretary in the Diplomatic Service of the United States and another commission as a Vice Consul of the United States. So, in the Consular part you have Consul General, which is the top Consular rank, then Consul, then Vice Consul. In some places we have honorary Consuls and Consular Agents, but that's another thing. They're not career people. The Consul General at a major Embassy would be equivalent to a Counselor, because he's in charge of this major section of the Embassy. But also, in many major cities which are not national capitals we will probably have a Consulate General there. If its a significant, but somewhat less important city, we would have a Consulate there with a Consul in charge. For example, in Barcelona, we would have a Consulate General. And again, there's been rank inflation with those, because a lot of cities that used to have only Consulates now have Consulates General. Then some of them are deserved and some are not deserved, because of the variety and extent of activities, the political importance, and so on.

Q: I see. So, when you were in Spain what about the Foreign Servicthroughout the whole country?

WILLIAMS: At that time, we had Consulates General in Sevilla, and Barcelona. We had Consulates in Valencia, Bilbao, and I believe we had one in Vigo, Galicia..

Q: But, then Madrid had the heaviest concentration?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. There was a heavier concentration of officiaAmericans in Madrid, right.

Q: Total number in Madrid, roughly?

WILLIAMS: Gosh, I really don't have much of an idea. Oh, we had a hundred or so in the Embassy. Well, not all of these were diplomatic officers. Some of them were secretaries and communications personnel who were not Foreign Service Officers, but Foreign Service Staff, we call them, some were “other agencies.”

Q: But, North Americans?

WILLIAMS: Americans, yes.

Q: And then of the Spanish-speaking?

WILLIAMS: We had probably another fifty or hundred Spanish local employees — Foreign Service Nationals, we call them. This would be particularly true in the cultural and information area, and in the Consular area. When I was Chief of the Visa Section there, I had two American officers working under me and about twelve Spaniards. So, that gives you kind of an idea. Of course, in other areas in the political section of the Embassy, you would find mostly Americans and just maybe a Spanish secretary.

Q: Yeah. I understand. That's helpful.

WILLIAMS: Now, I was going to tell you about back in the Department of State. Foreign Service officers are transferred back and forth from foreign posts to the State Department. Now under the Secretary of State you've got a Deputy Secretary and you've got Under Secretaries and you've got Assistant Secretaries. Usually, about the highest that a career officer would get, and this would be fairly rare, would be Assistant Secretary. A good many are Deputy Assistant Secretaries, but there aren't many Larry Eagleburgers who come

up as Foreign Service Officers and get to be Secretary of State. In fact, I think Larry is the only career Foreign Service Officer, if I'm not mistaken, that has ever gotten to be Secretary of State. I guess you could say that Larry is an exceptional person. Of course, there was a Foreign Service Officer who became Secretary of Defense, Frank Carlucci. That was tit-for-tat. because a career Army Officer, Alex Haig, had already served as Secretary of State. Anyway, that's a whole other story.

Q: Yes. Do you want to say anything else today? I would like for us to pick it up another time. But, anything else that you want to say today about Madrid or about any of that?

WILLIAMS: Well, I would be happy to pick it up any other time you want. I'm sure there are some things that I haven't thought of. I left Madrid in May of 1960 and went back to the Department of State for an assignment. The Ambassador fought to keep me there, and I think this was one of the things that people in the Department held against him. He was always wanting his own people in particular jobs, and to heck with the normal Department way of assigning or reassigning people. Anyway, he lost that battle.

Q: Was there an expected tenure per post for most people, dependinon rank?

WILLIAMS: Yes. Well, not depending on rank, but the expected tenure depended more on the nature of the post, whether it was a hardship post or not. I can't seem to convince people that Madrid was a hardship post. There, the normal tour of duty was four years divided by home leave in the middle or three years without home leave.

Q: Did you get home?

WILLIAMS: Yes, I did have home leave while I was there. Because, I had not had home leave after finishing my tour of duty in London. I went on direct transfer to Madrid.

Q: You just drove in that car.

WILLIAMS: I just drove down in my little car. So, I had home leavwhile I was in Spain.

Q: Did it seem strange to get back to the States from Spain? Was ia shock?

WILLIAMS: No. No, not really. I have really not had too many cultural shocks. The major shock on getting back to the United States from any country, except in London, was always how different the traffic is here, driving.

Q: And the size of the cars?

WILLIAMS: How polite American drivers are as opposed to the people in Spain or Italy or Argentina or wherever. Oh God. They are like absolute madmen!

Q: Yeah, I can remember some of those Spanish roads. Just let thego.

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

Q: Well, thanks so much for this morning. I would like for us tpick it up again.

WILLIAMS: Well, its been a pleasure. That will be fine.

—

Q: In Spain.

WILLIAMS: About the groups that I was a member of. There was another group that I neglected to mention before which we called a La Tertulia, just an informal men's group. About half of the members were Americans from the Embassy, and the other half were Spaniards from all different walks of life. We had a judge, a couple of lawyers, a doctor, a professor from the University, all kinds of people. We would meet for lunch every Wednesday. Now lunch in Spain is something else. We would meet at this little restaurant

— well, when I say little, it was a non-tourist type of restaurant, one that no tourist would ever think of going to, because it wasn't in a tourist part of town.

Q: The best kind for lunch?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right! We would meet there and first we'd have our tapas, hors d'oeuvres. Then we'd have our soup. Oh, and by the way, they're bringing bottles of red and white wine to the table and not counting how many bottles they bring. After the soup we'd have the fish. After the fish we'd have the meat. After the meat we'd have the dessert and with the dessert they'd bring the brandy and liqueurs. All this time we were talking, talking non-stop. This was really where I learned conversational Spanish. It was marvelous. We always spoke in Spanish, never English. In order to get a word in edge-wise, you had to be fluent. If you hesitated, if you were looking for a word, you would lose your chance, because somebody else would just jump right in. We talked about all kinds of different things. We had some people who were Franquistas and some people who were of a Republican background. I got a lot of the stuff from both sides. I really enjoyed that. It was a marvelous education and I made a lot of good friends too. So, I think maybe this was one of the best examples. You joined by invitation only.

Q: And this was all men?

WILLIAMS: All men. You had to be invited. You just couldn't apply and say you wanted to join. I hadn't even heard about it until a friend at the Embassy one day said, “Would you like to join me for lunch today at the Tertulia?” I didn't know what it was all about, but I went; and from then on I was sort of addicted. It was really just great. This went on from one o'clock until about four o'clock, because that's how long lunch takes in Madrid, you know. We talked about everything. I remember vividly one of these guys, the judge I believe, Judge Martin Cruz, arguing with me about Castro. By this time we're up in '59 and Castro was just coming in. He'd been on a guerrilla campaign and was just coming to power. The judge was saying over and over, “You people are silly to allow Castro to come

to power. You could stop him. He's a Communist." I said, "Oh no, he's not a Communist. No, Castro's an agrarian reformer. He's just a liberal. He wants to get rid of Batista and his oppressive government." And he replied, "No, you'll see, he's a Communist." A couple of years later I remember writing Judge Martin Cruz and telling him, "I'm sorry, you were right, I was wrong."

Q: How do you think he knew that so strongly?

WILLIAMS: I don't know. I don't know whether he had sources or whether he was just going by what Castro said and his background. At that time, we paid little attention to the fact that Castro had played a part in the Bagotazo in 1948.

Q: Yeah. Say a little bit more about that?

WILLIAMS: The Bagotazo. The leftist revolt against the Colombian government in 1948 after the assignation of, oh what's his name. That well known leftist political leader who was assassinated, and the immediate response was an uprising on the part of the left in Bogota. There was a very comfortable arrangement at the time. Colombia alternated the major parties in power and in the presidency. But, things have never been the same since the Bagotazo. That was sort of the beginning of what has become both the leftist armed uprising there and the criminal element there, because they fed on the violence, and the drug culture just sort of grew out of that. Now of course, they are close allies. They are just like evil twins.

Q: Just like two peas in a pod?

WILLIAMS: Very close, yes.

Q: At some point, I want to ask more about class structure and it seems to me that especially Madrid, there's such a sense of prosperity. I don't fully understand all of that, the class structure.

WILLIAMS: Well, I don't understand it fully either, but all I can say is that the class structure began with the nobility and the upper class, even though they might not be nobles, the big business people, the bankers, and so on. That was a class. Then, you had a middle class. I guess you could say you had an intellectual class. There was some overlap there with the upper class and some with the middle class. The intellectuals, the artists, and the University people were in both classes. And, in the middle economic class were the shop keepers, you know, the old Bourgeoisie. Then you had the workers and peasants. There were a lot of peasants in Spain at that time and they were the lower class. There was very little communication or say, there was little upward mobility out of the lower class. Some, there was, but not an awful lot. There was very little movement from the countryside into the cities. There was nothing really to attract a lot of people into the cities at that time. Since then, of course, that has changed to a considerable degree.

Q: So, there was not really a way for mixing to occur? Maybe nreason, no motive?

WILLIAMS: No, not a lot. As far as class structure, that's about all I can tell you about. Certainly the classes were pretty rigidly defined. For example, you would hardly find a young man of a higher class marrying a girl from a village. Marriages were most often within classes.

Q: And yet, the Catholic church would have been pretty much unifyinforce, I mean strong.

WILLIAMS: Unifying in the sense that you could go to any church in the country and they would all know the ritual and everything. You know, “First you get down on your knees, fiddle with your rosaries, bow your heads with great respect and genuflect, genuflect, genuflect.” Remember that one? Tom Lehrer.

Q: Right.

WILLIAMS: Anyway I don't think the Catholic Church was a unifying factor in so far as unification or bringing people together across class lines or across country-city lines.

The church was there in each village, and people were in that church in that village. If they came to Madrid and were there on a Sunday, then they would go to one of the big cathedrals or one of the churches and hear mass there, but they would then go back to their village, probably without even talking to anyone else in the church.

Q: I'm wondering while they were there that they might have been aware that they were very much from the country? Did they look different or maybe get treated differently, or act different?

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure that they would be treated differently. My impression at that time was that if some country person came in to one of the big churches in Madrid, he would simply be ignored. He would simply be another worshiper coming in to worship and then when he left he would be ignored. He would not be like our Protestant Ministers and I don't know if they do this in the Catholic church or not, where they get outside after the service and shake hands with everybody and have a little chat and so on. Nothing of that kind.

Q: Well, lots to think about, lots to talk about.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right.

Q: Thank you again.

—

WILLIAMS: I'll begin with what I considered to be my principal mission in Buenos Aires. Despite the fact that as we talked about the other day, there was a lot of terrorism going on and we were possible targets of it. Commercial work had to go on. As I mentioned, the Deputy Chief of my own section, my number two man was directly targeted, but fortunately we spotted it before anything serious could happen to him. There were all kinds of other attempts, some successful, on both American diplomatic personnel and American business people. Not just Americans either, but British, Italian, anybody who

represented capitalism and the “evil multinationals.” I did not mention, I think, that there were actually two terrorist groups. One of them was a Maoist and Fidelista group. I won't give my political science lecture on the difference between them, but the other one was the Montoneros. It came out of a radical fringe of the Catholic church. They were responsible for kidnaping a former Argentine president in 1970. That was the first major act of terrorism in Argentina. It had already started in Uruguay and Southern Brazil. The surveillance on this ex-president was conducted out of a Catholic monastery which was diagonally across the street from where he lived. There were monks and students there who were directly involved; they were the people who were doing this. It was all “liberation theology”. These people would go around saying, “If Christ were here among us today he would be out here with us with his backpack and rifle, fighting against imperialism and the multinationals.” Anyway, that made our work more difficult. But, my job, I felt, was to try actively to promote U.S. trade and investment. A two-way trade, probably not two-way investment, because the Argentines did not have much to invest abroad, but to promote productive American investment in Argentina. But, most of all to promote two-way trade, especially U.S. exports, while always taking into consideration that, in order to be able to import, Argentine had to be able to export too. I told you about one of the bigger deals that I had quite an active hand in putting across. But, let me just mention one more. In fact, this was the biggest one. The Argentine railways were trying to become more efficient. They had different gauges of rails in different parts of the country, different kinds of locomotives and equipment, and they wanted to begin to standardize so they wanted to procure close to two hundred locomotives. They had called for bids. What they wanted was to import the first fifty of these and then to have whoever won the bid, set up a plant down there to begin to manufacture locomotives locally, rather than import the whole thing. The General Motors Locomotive Division had put in a bid and there were two or three other competitors, a Belgian company, a British company, and an Italian company, FIAT. Well, one of the problems there was that FIAT had people on salary who were government employees working in the various economic ministries, the trade ministry and industry ministry, and they were paying them regular salaries to give them tips and to tilt things in their direction.

Now, we did not have such a thing. I was unaware if indeed any such thing was being done by any individual American company. I think I would have been aware of it, because I had some good friends in the Government when I first arrived there. An old friend of mine from my Uruguay days who had been a senior executive of the Latin American Free Trade Association was the Secretary of Foreign Trade. I think I would have known if there was something. He was not the only Senior Government person that I knew pretty well, but he was I guess my best friend. We still stay in contact. Subsequently he was the Minister of Industry and had several other important jobs, but is now retired. Anyway, the FIAT people were very, very competitive, shall we say? One of their little deals that they had going was they had the Governor of Cordoba, who was a retired military man, on their side, because they had promised to set up their plant out in Cordoba, rather than in the Buenos Aires area. I won't go through all of the things that I had to do or try to head FIAT off, but to make a long story short, the General Motors Locomotive Division did win the bidding after a very, very tough fight. That was several hundred million dollars. I figured that paid my salary for quite a while. The assistance that I gave them on that I think was crucial. And you see, it was not just me, but at times I had to get the Ambassador to go in and talk to the Minister of Economy or the Secretary of Industry or the Secretary of Commerce or whatever. I would trot out my big gun whenever I really had to. I didn't want to over-use the big gun, but the Ambassador was willing. I told you about him before, John Davis Lodge, at that time, and then later, Bob Hill of New Hampshire. That was quite a period of time, because this went on over a period of two or three years. Nothing goes very fast. And you see, this is one of the reasons that I think that I probably did more than a lot of people in my position, because I stayed there for five years and was able to follow through on some of these things, rather than just leave a note for my successor and say, “Hey, this is one of the big deals that I have been working on.”

Q: Was that the General Motors, was that toward the beginning omiddle part of your stay?

WILLIAMS: Middle part it must have been, because it overlapped the two Ambassadors. John Lodge left after the end of Nixon's first term, though not without some difficulty.

Q: Can you talk about that?

WILLIAMS: Oh, I can talk about it, what the heck. You see, Lodge didn't want to leave. He had been there four years and his appointment had been for that term. Well, I'm not sure whether it was made specifically clear to him or not. Maybe it wasn't. But, his appointment was considered to be for Nixon's first term, four years. Then, they wanted him to get out of the way and let someone else take a turn. So, the word was passed to him from the Department of State through the Desk Officer or the Office Director, or someone, that it was time for him to submit his resignation and leave. Well, he didn't want to. I remember him telling somebody - I was in his office one time and he was on the phone to somebody in Washington - and he was saying in that inimitable voice, which I will nevertheless try to imitate, “As you know, the Ambassador is the direct representative of the President of the United States. I am the direct representative of President Nixon to the Head of State of Argentina. When President Nixon asks me to resign, I shall resign.” I heard that, you see. Oh man, I will never forget that. I don't know who guy was on the other end. This is why the people in the Department of State just really hated his guts, because he was not duly respectful of them. Even though an Ambassador ranks higher than most of the people he would be talking to back there, nevertheless, an Ambassador is supposed to take these hints as if they were instructions from the Secretary of State or the President. But, he didn't feel that even the Secretary of State could tell him to resign; it was only the President. He was correct; technically he was correct. An Ambassador is the direct representative of the President to the Head of State of that country, and serves at the pleasure of the President. Anyway, he was finally convinced to resign. I really am not sure whether President Nixon talked to him personally. That I don't know, I wish I did. I wish I had asked him. But, I'm pretty sure he must have, or at least Nixon must have written to him and signed it himself, and he probably compared the signature to make sure.

Q: That would be good to know. An interesting piece of history.

WILLIAMS: I remember another incident which involved the treatment of the Ambassador. Secretary of State Rogers, William Rogers was there on a visit and they were going to visit the President of Argentina in the Casa Rosada, but they were not able to arrange an appointment there until the very last day. In fact, they were going to do that and then go immediately to the airport and the Secretary and his entourage were going to leave. And he had a quite an entourage with him.

Q: How many people?

WILLIAMS: I don't remember, but he had the Assistant Secretary for Inter- American Affairs (I believe that was Jack Kubisch) and I think at least one Deputy Assistant Secretary and several other people. Anyway, there was a motor-cade, beginning with the Ambassador's car, which wasn't one of these long stretch limousines, but it was a pretty impressive car for Buenos Aires at that time. It was a sort of a short limousine. Anyway, I was not part of the group that went in to the Casa Rosada. In fact, I was not even involved in it at all. I just happened to be down there, because I was going to see someone, some official of the government who had an office on the Plaza de Mayo, right next to the Casa Rosada. Anyway, when they came out of the Casa Rosada, the Secretary got in the Ambassador's limousine which was where he should be, but then he motioned over a couple of the other guys and said, “Come over and ride with me I want to talk with you,” or something like that. I really don't know what he said to them, because I wasn't close enough to hear, but anyway he motioned some of them to come over. Later I heard that when the Ambassador came over to get in the limousine with him, he said, “Could you let these guys ride with me and you ride in some other car?” But, there was no other car that was not already full. So, the Ambassador was left standing there on the street in front of the Casa Rosada by the Secretary of State. I thought that was despicable! The motorcade went out to Ezeiza airport. The Ambassador caught a taxi and went out to the airport. Although I wasn't there I did hear about it. They said he was very polite. He said good-bye

to the Secretary and all of the other people and did not betray how he felt, even by a facial expression, which I thought was something that I might not have been able to do myself. But, I just thought that this was an awful way to treat an Ambassador in front of officials of the Government to which he was the envoy.

Q: The American Ambassador who was left standing - what was his name?

WILLIAMS: John Davis Lodge, former Governor of Connecticut, former member of Congress from Connecticut, American Ambassador. You know, the Secretary of State when he comes to visit a country should be doing all he can to promote the image of the Ambassador, not undermine him. I don't believe that the Argentines really noticed this, though. I'm really not sure about that. They might have, but I don't believe that it actually served to undermine his Ambassadorship, or what was left of it. This happened at the time when they were trying to get him to resign, and he was resisting until he heard from the President.

Q: Oh, but that would not have necessarily been the reason for hibeing left standing there?

WILLIAMS: It might have been, I really don't know. But, that reallmade me angry.

Q: That must have been a sight to witness.

WILLIAMS: Yes, it was. Anyway, I hope with what I have said, with all the asides and everything, sums up the job that I was doing. I really felt that I did a good job there. I knew just about everybody who was worth knowing in Argentine business and industry and the government agencies that dealt with economic matters. I could walk around Buenos Aires and I could think; “This is my city. I know this city.” I'm sure there was an awful lot that I didn't know, but still I could walk around, I could walk down the Calle Florida or the Calle Sarmiento and I would see people on the street that I knew and greet them. I was a member of several influential clubs, and I could go in a club and greet high-level people. I really felt good about knowing all these people. Getting to know everybody came about

through a fairly gradual process — well perhaps not all that gradual. I think when I'd been there two years I began to have that feeling and then for the next three years, I felt I really knew Buenos Aires.

Q: I would say that's too strong a feeling to manufacture. I think we, as professionals know when we are doing a good job or when we're not doing a good job, and I would say yes, that you certainly were. You certainly did your homework — I'm looking at your book, The American Club Directory, and it lists some of the different companies there, not only Embassy people, but other people there, people from banks.

WILLIAMS: They would come to me and ask for help sometimes, especially because of the things that happened when Peron returned. In fact, it happened even before that, when Peron's stand-in, Hector Campora, became President in 1972. Actually, there were two or three major business organizations there. One of them was the Buenos Aires Chamber of Commerce. That was oriented towards small businesses in Buenos Aires itself and in the immediately surrounding area. Then, there were two national business organizations. One was mostly the big multinationals of all nationalities. The other one was smaller, with mostly Argentine firms. Before the Peronists took over in '72, or maybe early '73, the big multinational business organization was much the more influential. But, the smaller Argentine-owned business people somehow felt that their interests were better looked after by this other organization and they may have been correct, I don't know. Anyway, that organization became exceedingly influential after the Peronist take-over. I shouldn't say “take-over.” It was a legal election. In fact, the President of that Argentine manufacturers organization became the Minister of Economy. His name was Gelbard. There happens to be an Assistant Secretary of State right now named Bob Gelbard, and I heard him say one time back in the 70's, “Hey, this guy's my cousin.” Apparently, as happened in so many cases, one brother emigrated from Europe to the United States and another brother went to Argentina, or Brazil. Anyway, that outfit promoted a lot of legislation designed to discriminate against foreign firms in favor of Argentine firms. This is one thing that we would really oppose any time that we saw it — discrimination. We thought that all firms

needed to be treated equally, and not on the basis of the ownership of their capital. But we did have a very hard time. American companies had a lot more problems after Minister Gelbard came to power.

Q: How would the Argentine group have reacted to General Motors?

WILLIAMS: Well, no Argentine company was then capable of manufacturing locomotives, but I think a lot of them felt that FIAT would be more friendly to them, because after all, the FIAT were “Italians.” There are an awful lot of Italians or people of fairly close Italian descent in Argentina. “Sono i nostri fratelli.”

Q: Did you know of any Argentine of that influential group who mighhave openly opposed the General Motors?

WILLIAMS: Yes, there were some and I can't remember exactly who they were, but I do remember there certainly were some. As I recall, I got the representative of General Motors Locomotive Division together with some of these people to talk about supplying parts and components, how the contracts would be let for supplying parts and components. They were going to be locally manufactured. I think that after they had a chance to meet with him they felt a lot better about it. They didn't feel that they were going to get frozen out by the Norteamericanos. So, I think it helped. The Governor of Cordoba, who, by the way, had an Italian name, was the son of an Italian immigrant. He was a retired Admiral. We had to keep fighting him the whole time. He never gave up. He wanted that plant out in the Providence of Cordoba and FIAT had promised it to him; although, we had suspicions that FIAT might not have delivered on it and we sort of worked on those suspicions.

Q: That's interesting to know. I'm just noticing here, wonderinabout the place of the press. At that time, how did you view the press?

WILLIAMS: The press. Well, there were two principle newspapers at the time. Well, maybe three. There was La Prensa, which was the old classic one. Then there was another called El Pais, then another one that was just being set up at that time. Now what was the name of it? I think it was Clarin. It was a sort of a New York Post kind of thing. Not quite tabloid, but not New York Times either, if you know what I mean. Then there were a couple of economic weeklies that we felt were very good. One of them was published by the Professor that I mentioned to you, the Professor of Economics who was run out of his classroom by some communists guerrillas with machine guns who, with Peron's permission, had taken over the University. He was the publisher of one of these economic weeklies which I felt was quite reliable. There was an English language newspaper there too. It was owned by a matter of fact at that time by a guy that owned the Charleston, South Carolina, newspaper. I don't think they exercised any editorial control or anything like that, but the owner was this fellow from Charleston. I don't know how he ever got in on it, but he did. They called it the Buenos Aires Herald. It was kind of interesting. It would concentrate on things more of interest to the American and British communities.

Q: That's interesting. I'm looking at this directory.

WILLIAMS: What was the one you were looking at?

Q: La Prensa. I wondered how much they had to do with influencininternational policy?

WILLIAMS: Well, I'm not sure they had much. Well, maybe I'm selling them short, but I don't think they had all that much influence, and I don't believe that they really tried, to the same extent as the New York Times and the Washington Post do, to influence policy in a certain direction, that kind of thing. They were conservative papers and that's what — this other one that I mentioned, the kind of New York Post thing was more liberal, not really leftist, but tending in that direction. The publisher of it, was later put in jail for a while around '76 or '77, after I left, because apparently the military government thought he was feeding information to the Marxist rebels or something like that, and he published a book

about his experiences. I remember the name of the book, but I don't remember his name. The book was called “Prisoner Without A Name, Cell Without A Number.” He got out alright; nothing serious happened to him. He eventually got out, and was able to write the book.

Q: For the record did we establish your time there?

WILLIAMS: '70 to '75. I went there in January of '70 and left iMarch '75.

Q: You did stay over another year? You didn't have to do that?

WILLIAMS: I stayed a year longer than my tour of duty originally called for, because there was some difficulty in finding an appropriate person who wanted to go there and be my replacement.

Q: I see. The language, the situation of the country, the terrorisactivity, why?

WILLIAMS: Well, I guess probably all of these things had some impact. I'm not trying to down my fellow Foreign Service officers. But, the thing is everybody really would like to try to find some place where he can go and take his family and have a safe tour of duty and some people do choose dangerous places, especially if there is a twenty-five percent or so danger differential attached.

Q: The situation wasn't exactly a piece of cake. There waterrorist activity. And you did stay on?

WILLIAMS: Yes. As I think I mentioned before, I felt that I knew the territory and could take care of myself perhaps a little better than a brand new person.

Q: Yes, you did know it by that time. The sheer length of time, the five years as opposed even to four would have made a difference. So, what were some of your feelings as you

were planning to leave, as you thought about leaving? What did you say to the people coming in?

WILLIAMS: Well, there was a very interesting little event that happened as I was getting ready to leave. The Ambassador, Bob Hill, had a farewell luncheon for me at the Embassy Residence which was a palatial old home, several miles out of the real downtown part of Buenos Aires, but still well within the city. It was situated across from a nice, long park with a lake in it and everything. Anyway, the luncheon was attended by a lot of very distinguished and influential people. The Minister of Economy, Dr. Martinez de Hoz, the Secretaries of Commerce and Industry, the President of the Central Bank, and gosh, I don't know how many distinguished government and business leaders. The table would take thirty-five or so people and it was a nice full table. I was very, very pleased that all of these people would turn out to say good-bye to me. At some point during the lunch, one of the servants came in and whispered something to the Ambassador. The Ambassador got up and left for just a moment, came back, sat down and we heard nothing about why. There was no interruption or anything, everybody kept talking. Turned out later that what had happened was that several rifle shots had been fired into the front of the Embassy. The dining room was in the rear, overlooking the rear garden and the rifle shots had not penetrated that far. Apparently, the Marxist guerrillas had seen all of these cars out there and so they thought they would do some protesting or something like that. So, anyway I thought that was interesting. But nobody got hit.

Q: You learned this later?

WILLIAMS: I learned it right after the lunch. After the Argentine guests had left, and only Embassy people were there, the Ambassador told us. I think there was the Deputy Chief of Mission and the CIA Station Chief and the Economic Counselor and so on. Our boss told us what had happened.

Q: Did somebody guard your retreat?

WILLIAMS: Oh no. We thought that since this was broad daylight and we had been warned, we didn't think they would feel that they could do anything else. I felt very good when I left Argentina, because I was going as Consul General to Auckland, New Zealand, a post which I very much wanted and had worked hard to get. As I said before, I really felt that I had done a good job there. In fact, I think I was perhaps a key factor in getting a number of really major contracts for American companies, including some that I didn't mention. There were a good many of them. I felt very good about that assignment. So, I left for New Zealand with a good feeling.

Q: I don't know whether I should press you on some of the details of some of those other companies besides General Motors, but would that have been companies throughout all of Argentina or mainly Buenos Aires?

WILLIAMS: Most of them had their major manufacturing facilities in the Buenos Aires area, but some of the companies had at least some subsidiary facilities in other areas like Cordoba and Rosario or Sante Fe. They were mostly in the area right around Buenos Aires.

Q: Major activities there. I'm thinking also about your training, the work in economics at Yale, did that prepare you and help you as when you went to Buenos Aires?

WILLIAMS: Yes, it did. I felt that it was very valuable. It prepared me even more for the Montevideo job, because I was directly involved in the international economics of the Latin American Free Trade Association, but still in Buenos Aires it helped me out also.

Q: I guess maybe we haven't touched that much on international connections in the '70's, what was going on throughout Mexico, Central America, South America?

WILLIAMS: Well, one of the things that was going on was that all of the liberal and leftist economists at the time, (if that is not a contradiction in terms) (laughter) they all believed in the so-called Prebisch Thesis. Are you familiar with the Prebisch Thesis?

Q: No.

WILLIAMS: Well, Raul Prebisch was a distinguished Argentine gentleman who had occupied high positions in the Argentine government and subsequently was named Director (I forget the exact title) of the Economic Commission for Latin America of the United Nations. This is a very influential sort of think tank, based in Santiago de Chile. Back in the early '49 or '50, Prebisch and another economist named Singer had come up with the so-called Prebisch- Singer Thesis to the effect that the terms of international trade were steadily turning against producers of raw materials and primary products, and in favor of manufactured products. Of course, the third world countries like Argentina were involved primarily in the production of primary or perverting raw materials. The United States and England, and so on, were exporting manufactures. So, therefore, the terms of trade were worsting for these countries in the third world and were getting better for us biggies. Well, the terms of trade is a measure — let me put it like this. This is a very simplistic way to explain it, but how many tons of wheat does it cost to buy a tractor? Then, of course, you have to convert these into money. The thing that they were saying was, every year, every decade, it takes more and more tons of wheat to buy a tractor or whatever from the wealthy Northern Hemisphere, Western countries. So, everybody believed that this was exploitation, and this was what accounted for the poverty of the third world countries. They were being exploited by these Northern Hemisphere countries and their multinational corporations. Well, this turned out actually not to be the case. It was shown, to be wrong. I forget who wrote the paper that showed that thesis to be false, (I think it was Gottfried Haberler), but Prebisch had used the wrong figures in his original 1950 paper. He had calculated the terms of trade between England and Argentina for the period of 1870 up to just before World War II. A long period of time. One would think

that, over such a long of period of time, you could come up with some good figures. But it turned out that on one side he was using the F.O.B. figures and on the other side he was using C.I.F. figures. In other words, what was happening there was that he was counting in the cost, insurance, and freight on one side but not on the other side. Over this period of time, transportation costs were coming down so it looked as though the price of wheat was coming down. So, it looked as though his thesis was true that the price of wheat was steadily coming down in relation to the price of manufactures. Wheat, meat, and other raw materials or primary products. When this pointed out to him, he readily accepted it. In fact, I had lunch with him one time at the ECLA meeting in 1969 in Lima. I don't recall whether at that time he had publicly come out and said he was wrong, but I brought up the subject and he immediately said, “Oh yes, I read that paper and yes, I was wrong. I chose the wrong figures.” He said, “I've still got to look and see whether there is anything to my original thesis about the deterioration of the terms of trade for primary producing countries, but I was wrong.” He admitted it quite freely. Anyway, I went back to the Embassy that day and wrote a nice, long cable to the Department of State. “Today at lunch, Dr. Raul Prebisch admitted to me that the Prebisch Thesis was in error.” I felt really important. Oh, boy. Anyway, I would think that was probably the major thing that was happening in international economics at that time. The Prebisch Thesis almost had universal acceptance by the entire left, academics, and people who were working in international trade. They all accepted it. Just no question about it that the multinationals, the industrialized countries were exploiting the poor countries of the Southern Hemisphere, and so on. In fact, even today, you still hear some people talking as though they accept that thesis. Of course, this was one of the main things on which Liberation Theology was based, because Liberation theology was going to liberate these countries from this oppression by these exploiters.

Q: You talk about Liberation Theology. How intimately was thainvolved in the politics?

WILLIAMS: It was really closely involved. I don't consider myself all that good a Christian, but I am a Christian and I just felt a lot of anger to hear these leftists saying, “If Christ

were here today, he'd be carrying his knapsack and his rifle and going out with us to fight against the multinational oppressors."

Q: Speaking of liberation, how important is religion in all of thcountry? It is a Catholic country?

WILLIAMS: Pretty important. It used to be, of course, that in all of Latin America there were two ways for a young man to get ahead if he was not born in to the aristocracy or the upper middle class, or he could either go into the armed forces or into the Church. That was more true perhaps in some of the poor countries like, Paraguay and Bolivia than in Argentina. Because, after all, Argentina was a pretty wealthy country, as was Uruguay. In fact, in 1930, all of Argentina's economic statistics, as I recall, were better than Canada's. It really ranked right up there almost as a developed country to the same extent as Canada, back then. But things just went down hill. I think one reason, we touched on when we talked about Peron the other day. Argentina made an awful lot of money, piled up a lot of foreign exchange reserves, during World War II; selling meat and other food products to the allies. After the war, they had an enormous amount of foreign exchange built up. So, what did they do? Well, it really got frittered away. Peron did two things. One, he bought out all of the foreign-owned utilities, which is O.K. Although, why do it if things are getting along fine even if the foreigners are making some money out of it. Anyway, their public utilities were getting kind of old by then. Peron probably paid too much for them. Then the other thing was that he promoted industrialization. Non-economic industrialization. He really didn't care whether it was economic or not. The new industries were being created just so they would employ people who would vote for him. More industrial workers, more meat-packing plant workers to vote for the Peronist Party. So, most of that money got frittered away, rather than being spent sensibly to bring Argentina into the modern world.

Q: That original wealth going back to the 30's was based primarilon what?

WILLIAMS: Meat and grain exports, and sheep down in the southerpart of Argentina.

Q: So, by the time you got through with that, there wasn't that mucwealth left there?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right. Then too, you see, they were always looking for some big cow to milk, and for a while there it was the big land- owners. He was taxing them and he was setting up export agencies. For example, farmers were not allowed to export their grain directly. They had to sell it to this government agency which would then export it. The government fixed the price at which they the agencies would buy the stuff. Then, the government would make a big profit on it, leaving the farmers just enough to keep them going. Same with meat. There was a slightly different way of handling it there, but they did virtually the same thing.

Q: Small landowners, or relatively small as opposed to large or both?

WILLIAMS: It was all the same.

Q: By the time Peron got through with it, it was not the same?

WILLIAMS: After Peron left the first time, I think the landowners were better off. Every government had a tendency to try and make the money off of the landowner, the primary products, rather than putting on taxes that would affect the workers in Buenos Aires and the other major cities.

Q: When was all this happening? How involved was the State Department or Embassy, how much did the Embassy know about all of this, the history and the practice?

WILLIAMS: Well, that's a good question. I think there was a good bit that the individuals in the Embassy knew. For example, the Ag. Attache. I don't think he knew much about the history of agricultural production in the country, nor how the landowners had gotten their start, nor about their relations with the gauchos that worked the land and rode herd on their beef cattle and their sheep and so on. But there was a good bit of knowledge around here and there, because you know, when you go out and have lunch with some

Argentine, he'll tell you a lot about the background of his particular activity and you learn a lot about it, especially if you go right back to the Embassy and write it up, take notes and write up, if it's interesting enough write up a report to the Department of State or the Department or Commerce or Department of Agriculture or whatever. I'm just trying to think of the Embassy as a corporate body, how much knowledge did we have? Well, quite a lot scattered here and there, but not in any organized way. But, we could brief a visitor. If we had some important person come down, an Assistant Secretary or the Special Trade Representative, or somebody like that, we could all get together and brief him and answer questions. If there were six or eight of us around the table, we could answer almost any question he had, including the history, or present activities, or present situation, just about anything. When one guy would leave that would leave a pretty big gap until his successor sort of got up to speed.

Q: And it would take him some time, no matter how brilliant oaccomplished and insightful?

WILLIAMS: It would take some time, yes. Sure. And of course, the Department of State has a policy of transferring people frequently. I think it's a basically good policy of transferring people around every two, three, four years. I think I may have mentioned at one stage about Henry Kissinger's GLOP Policy. I forget what GLOP stood for. He found some people at some Embassies who had been there too long, not necessarily in that same country, but in that same area. For example, I think he went to Mexico and he found some guy in the Embassy that had been there for I don't know how many years and before that he was in Guatemala and before that he was in Nicaragua. He had been in Mexico and Central America so long that it seemed to Kissinger at the time apparently that he had a clearer view of their interests than he did of the United States interests. So, with that he decided to break these people loose from the places they had been for so long. If he was a Central American specialist, get him heck out of Central America and send him to Africa or Europe or some place. Basically, I think it was a good policy, because people do tend to get attached to a place where they are for a long time and do become, to some extent

advocates for that country in the United States, rather than advocates for the United States in that country.

Q: Do you think that was Kissinger's pet idea or did other peoplhave it?

WILLIAMS: I think other people had had it probably before, but Kissinger just did it — something set him off. I really don't know what the incident was, but it was something like I just described, and I believe it was when he made a visit to Mexico.

Q: That's interesting. That's good to know. Thinking about some of your feelings as you left the country, feelings about people, food, music, you know. I still want to know about women again. Women there in the country, were there a lot of women working in Buenos Aires?

WILLIAMS: Ole, ole. Yes, there were an awful lot of women working there in the city. As I mentioned before, I think, it was more of a European city than a Latin American city. It reminded me very much of Madrid or Paris. Some people said Paris, but I've never lived in Paris, so I couldn't really compare the two for living. One little indicator is that there were more hotels that rented rooms by the hour in Buenos Aires than in any other city I have ever seen anywhere. Now, I don't know what that tells you about it, but it's got to tell you something.

Q: Wow, that's interesting. Women who work, say in business, ibanks or in other multinational corporations, what about their training?

WILLIAMS: Down there in Latin America, you don't go to the University unless you are preparing for a career in which University training is necessary. There were many professional women. Lawyers for example. There were some women doctors. There were women in other professions, much more so than in most other Latin American countries. There weren't very many women in the Foreign Affairs Agencies there, the Ministry of

Foreign Relations or Ministry of Economy, but there were some. We just felt that this was a fairly progressive Latin American country in that respect.

Q: Because I think many of us in North America feel, well, the LatiAmerican Machismo — maybe men need to have the more important jobs.

WILLIAMS: Well, that's true. There's certainly a lot of that around, perhaps more so than here. But, let me just give you one little incident which has nothing to do with Argentina. One of the visitors that I escorted around as an interpreter several years ago was Gustav De Greiff, who at the time was a Justice of the Supreme Court of Colombia. He had been a Minister in the government. His daughter, who was in her late thirties had been Minister of Justice. A year or so before he came here, she had resigned, because her life and that of her children had been threatened by the Medellin drug cartel, and she felt this was a serious threat since they had killed an awful lot of government people down there, so she resigned. They told her to resign, leave, or else. So, she resigned. Later, after he was here for a while he took over, not that specific job, but the job of chief prosecutor, a kind of Attorney General job. The chief government prosecutor. But, I see recently —

Q: In Argentina?

WILLIAMS: No. This was in Colombia. I'm sorry. Perhaps I didn't mention it was Colombia. I beg your pardon. I should have said that at the very first. Anyway, Gustav De Greiff was apparently not tough enough on the cartel to suit us and we are now very happy apparently that he has been replaced by someone else who we think is tougher on the cartels. Anyway, his daughter was a Minister of the Government at the age of only about thirty-eight or thirty-nine.

Q: Wow. And that would have been unusual for any of their countries?

WILLIAMS: It was fairly unusual. It's not unheard of, but fairlunusual.

Q: Your being called on to be an interpreter — where was that anwhen?

WILLIAMS: Bob Hill, replaced John Lodge as Ambassador in Argentina. I vaguely knew him, because at one point when I went back to Washington -

—

Q: We're in the home of Mr. Williams. Today is Monday, June 12,1995, interview number two.

WILLIAMS: This is John E. Williams, better known as Ed. Would yolike for me to begin with the time I left Madrid?

Q: That would be just fine. Let's pick that up.

WILLIAMS: I think I mentioned this briefly before. I left Madrid in May of 1960 and went to Germany to pick up a car I had ordered, a beautiful Mercedes Benz sports car, 190 SL. It cost me a half year's salary, but it was worth it. It was Carolina blue. I drove out the door of the factory, near Stuttgart, and I felt like the king of the world. Anyway, I drove down to Naples and put the car on a ship — I forget whether it was the Independence or the Constitution, they both made regular trips across the Atlantic from Naples in those days. On arriving in New York, I drove the car down to Washington. I was assigned to the Department of State, in the Bureau of European Affairs, Office of Western European Affairs, specifically. I was the Economic Officer on the Italian desk. I didn't really know anything about Italy, but I learned. Of course, Foreign Service Officers were supposed to be able to drop into any job in the Foreign Service, hit the ground running, and do a great job. So that's what I was trying to do.

Q: And your actual post on the desk was? Tell me a little bit morabout how that worked.

WILLIAMS: Well, each country desk had one or more political officers, depending on the importance of the country. Sometimes they talk about “The Desk Officer,” well, there's often more than one. They were usually divided into political and economic, at least in the geographic bureaus; and then in another bureau, the Public Affairs Bureau, there would be a public affairs person covering the same area. Anyway, we covered all the Western European countries in our office of Western European Affairs. There were one or two political officers and at least one economic officer for each country, and the economic officers would, of course, consider such things as trade negotiations or that country's economic relationships with the Soviet Union and the eastern bloc, and would worry about American firms or individuals that might have economic-type problems with that country. It was an interesting assignment and I did learn a lot about Italy. I came fairly close to being stationed in Rome, but I missed it, because the gentleman at the Embassy in Rome who had virtually promised me an assignment there, who's name was — and this will be familiar to all old Foreign Service people — Outerbridge Horsey. He actually had a daughter who is still in the Foreign Service. Anyway, he got transferred as Ambassador to Czechoslovakia, so he was no longer particularly interested in getting me to come to Rome at the completion of my tour of duty. Anyway, that's another story. I found this desk job to be a very interesting assignment in many ways, especially the parts of it that concerned Italy's industries and how the then Soviet Union was attempting to get products that they couldn't otherwise get, because of — have you ever heard of COCOM? Great. They were trying to find weaknesses in COCOM, which was an agreement by which most of the Western countries agreed not to ship or sell strategic materials to the Soviets. There were the titanium spinning nozzles, anyway I won't go into that, it's a long story. But, the Russians wanted to get titanium to build submarines, but they claimed they wanted titanium because it made good spinning nozzles for artificial fibers, and that's what they allegedly wanted. They said they were setting up these enormous artificial fiber factories and they needed many titanium spinning nozzles. What they really wanted, of course, was submarines. Anyway, that was one big fight we had. Another was, I think it was called the Druzhba pipeline. They wanted to get Italy to manufacture this forty-eight inch

diameter, spiral welded pipeline which would enable them to supply oil to the Iron Curtain countries and also, to sell some oil to the Western European countries, hoping to get them dependent on Russian oil so they would be less likely to do things the Russians did not like. I'm just telling you those things to illustrate why I felt this was a good interesting job.

Q: Remind me what year this was.

WILLIAMS: '60 and '61. Then, there wahad a reduction in force. My job was abolished and I had to find something else to do. For a short period of time I went to the Bureau of Inter American Affairs.

Q: Before you get to that let's back up just a little bit. Tell me a little bit more about some of the companies flourishing, wanting to flourish, Italian and on.

WILLIAMS: There was the ENI, which was what we called the Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi, their state-owned petroleum company. It was a real maverick company. I forget the details, but they would not go along with the U.S., British, Dutch, French and everybody that wanted to establish a joint petroleum policy. Remember, the Arab countries were at the beginning of the process of becoming empowered. You realize, I'm sure, that the peaceful transfer of petroleum rights was the greatest peaceful transfer of power ever to take place in the history of the world. Never before. At least I can't think of any instance where such a tremendous transfer of resources, and the power that resources brings, has taken place peacefully. I'd sure be interested if somebody could give me an example of one that was as large or larger and was peaceful. Anyway, the ENI was always undermining the petroleum policy of the other Western countries. I'm sure a lot of people say that was a good thing, because we were dirty old Imperialists who were trying to exploit the poor Arabs and so on, kind of forgetting that it was after all Western companies and individuals who discovered the oil and put the wells in; put in the docks and the loading facilities and so on. Well, I guess that was another example of the interest which I found in this particular job.

Q: So the petroleum. Any other large big companies or concerns?

WILLIAMS: Well, yes. The other was the FIAT. Let's see, what happened in the automobile world at that time? I forget. You know, these things do slip away. But, I do remember we had a big problem with FIAT. What was it now? I think it might have been something to do with their factory, their subsidiary in Spain, but I'm not quite sure. I'm sorry, I just can't dredge it up.

Q: That's O.K. I realize we didn't talk about that and I haven't done enough homework on it myself, but was just wondering. So, the Italian duty was interesting?

WILLIAMS: Yes. At that time, of course, there were a lot of very interesting things going on politically in Italy, and I was not closely involved with those, because Sam Lewis was doing that part: Ambassador Sam Lewis, who has since become very well known. Anyway, the Communist Party of Italy was quite strong, but the Communist Party had spun off a group which called itself Socialists. It distinguished itself from the regular Socialist party by putting some adjective before “Socialist.” I forget what. Anyway, the idea was that it was to get a lot of voters who didn't want to vote for a party that called itself Communist. There was a lot of concern, as there had been earlier in 1948, that the Communists might get enough votes to take over the national government from the Christian Democrats or a Christian Democrat coalition. This is something that worried us deeply.

Q: Was that activity greatly concentrated in one city more thaanother, in Italy?

WILLIAMS: No. The Communists did have Bologna; the Mayor of Bologna was and old Communist. I think several of the major cities went Communist, or nearly so. As I recall, these included Milano, Naples, and Torino. It was interesting at the time, because you were getting a lot of people from the southern part of Italy, from Naples or from south of Naples and Sicily, coming up to the North to take jobs, because the booming industry up North in Torino and Milano and Bologna. The Communists and these Socialists that I

mentioned would meet them at the trains. They didn't know exactly who was coming, but they'd be down there at the station to meet all these Southern immigrants, and they would take them and get them places to live. Just like the Democrat bosses in Boston used to go down to the docks and meet the immigrants coming in from Ireland or from Germany or wherever to get them on their side politically. These people, who had been voting Christian Democrat when they were living in Palermo or Catania orNaples, would then switch and start voting Communist or extreme left-wing Socialist when they went to work up North. So, that was another interesting little thing. It was a very interesting period.

Q: What did the United States government, or how did the United States government get involved or what could they do to change any of their activities?

WILLIAMS: Well, we couldn't change it. There was nothing we could do. All we could do was observe it and see what was happening. Now what was going on behind the scenes I really don't know. I just wasn't that high on the totem pole. I didn't get to see the real super-top-secret telegrams at that time. All I could see was Top Secret, not the really high level stuff.

Q: Who would have been sending those back and forth?

WILLIAMS: Well, the Ambassador signed all the telegrams from the Embassy, but of course someone else would often draft them. The Ambassador would draft maybe one out of ten. Our office director would draft a lot of messages from our end, or maybe the Deputy Assistant Secretary or the Assistant Secretary. Occasionally, one would say, “Well, this is really important, we'd better run this by the Secretary.” Anyway, there was a lot of discussion going back and forth as to how we could best insure and strengthen the Italians centrists in the moderate left and moderate right. We didn't want any take over by the extreme right either, the Neo-fascisti. It was a little party then which might have gotten bigger if the Communists expanded on the left; you know, then the Neo-fascisti would expand on the right. But, we were I think, just trying to find some way that

we could strengthen the Italians' back-bone, give them assistance, aid, because we were still not completely out of giving aid to European countries the thing that started with the Marshall Plan. But, I think probably the major thing that we did or tried to do was support the idea, which was then fairly new, of the European Common Market. The Treaty of Rome of 1956 was still fairly new. Of course, for the European countries to get together in an organization in which they would give each other lower tariffs than they charged other countries, such as us, would be economically disadvantageous to us in the short run. But we felt that it would have such tremendous advantages in the long run, both economically and politically that really we had to support it. In the long run, we felt that increasing the size of the European market would bring about much greater economic activity and in the long run would cause an increase in exports from the United States, and indeed that's what happened. This was a fairly new idea at that time. After all, I think Jacob Vinner had only written his book on Customs Unions and Common Markets in 1950. The idea was older than that, but that was the first real clear explanation, Jacob Vinner's 1950 book at Princeton. In addition to that, the economic growth which we foresaw being caused by the European Union would render people less likely to vote for some radical solution like the Communists or the fascists. In other words, we were willing to suffer short-term losses for long-term gains, and those long-term gains I think, have been amply borne out despite the fact that we do have some people around who, even today, after all these successes, are still moaning and groaning about the GATT, the new World Trade Organization, and NAFTA.

Q: Yes. From your point of view on the economic desk, did this new plan, the new arrangement seem difficult, coming fairly soon on the heels of the close of World War II?

WILLIAMS: Yes, because they still had not fully recovered from World War II. In a way, perhaps World War II had helped, because, for example, most of the railway stations were brand new. They were brand new, because the old ones had been destroyed in World War II. While we in this country had old, old railway stations, there in Europe they had new

ones. This is a heck of a way to get a new railway station, have the old one bombed, but still ...

Q: So, those were some of the major concerns of that time, '60-'61 on the desk. Did it seem strange to be back in the States? I think I might have asked you that.

WILLIAMS: Well, it did in a way, but there I was riding around in Washington, DC, a young, unmarried guy in my Carolina blue Mercedes Benz sports car.

Q: It sounds like a good life, a good time in Washington. It'lovely most any time of year, especially in a Carolina blue Mercedes.

WILLIAMS: Right. Let me just give you something real quick, because I don't know how much this is worth since I was only there six months or so. I went to the Bureau of Inter American Affairs. I was in the Public Affairs Office of the Bureau. I was the Officer in Charge of public affairs matters for the Caribbean Basin, Central America and Mexico. What this meant was that I had to follow what was going on in all of these areas, each country. Every time there was a press conference, the Secretary's press conference or just the Department spokesman's press conference, or occasionally a presidential press conference, I had to be prepared to come up with questions that I thought the press might ask and provide answers, which reflected U.S. policy. A couple of times, President Kennedy actually was asked questions that I had thought he might be asked, so it was a real thrill to hear him using my language.

Q: Where was this office?

WILLIAMS: Actually, this was in the old State Department building which of course adjoined New State, but it was in the Old State right there on 21st Street, between C and D.

Q: Your actual title or post was?

WILLIAMS: My title was Officer in Charge, Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico, Office of Public Affairs of the Bureau of Inter American Affairs.

Q: I'm thinking about President Kennedy's responses. Tell me some of the questions. Do you remember some of those questions or issues or just generally, the situation as you saw it?

WILLIAMS: The situation at that time was very peaceful down there, in general. There was nothing much going on and I don't remember any of the specific questions. It was seldom that a question would come up and therefore, I guess I ought to remember the ones that did, but what we were worried about at the time was, we were beginning to worry about the economic development of the region, because Puerto Rico had, just a few years previously, adopted what they called Operation Boot-Strap. Governor Munoz Marin had put into effect this Operation Boot-Strap to pull Puerto Rico up by its boot-straps, because Puerto Rico was — well, you might say its either, the poorest of the American states, (though of course, it's not a state) or the richest of the Caribbean and Central American countries. They were pretty poor compared to us and they still are.

Q: And the year?

WILLIAMS: This was the first half of 1962. I guess the big thinwas Cuba, though things had quieted down somewhat after the Bay of Pigs.

Q: Could you see more trouble coming?

WILLIAMS: By the time I was there, we had already clamped down economically on Cuba, because the Communist government under Castro had confiscated a lot of American-owned property down there and said they were not going to give any compensation to these “Imperialists and oppressors of the masses.” Here is something that you may find of interest. I'll jump ahead for a moment. After six months in this job I really wasn't enjoying it too much and I didn't think that it was going to help my career at all. I had gotten

into the economic/commercial area of work while I was in Madrid and stayed in it on the Italian desk, so that when the opportunity arose to take graduate study in Economics, I grabbed it. Every year the Department would send a few people off to take graduate study in economics. They always needed economists. I decided to go off and get a masters degree in economics. So, I applied for that and I got it. As a matter of fact, it was kind of funny, because the guy in charge of assigning people said, “Do you know there are about ten people being sent to graduate schools all over the country?” I was thinking, gee, Stanford might be nice or maybe UCLA, somewhere in California, but then the guy said, “You know, we have four guys that want to go to Harvard and people that want to go to Stanford, Michigan and Chicago, places that have good faculties of economics, you know.” Then he said, “But we haven't got anybody that wants to go to Yale, and we always send one person to Yale. If we don't send somebody there, Yale is going to feel like we're not interested in them any more, so wouldn't you like to go to Yale?” So, I said, “Well sure, I'll go to Yale.” So, I went to Yale and the following year (1962-63) got my Masters in Economics. While I was at Yale, the Cuban missile crisis broke out. Shortly before this happened, since the Cuban problem was obviously heating up, we had speakers who came there and spoke to classes of graduate students. One of these guys was Castro's first Minister of Economics or Finance, I forget which. After one of the seminars, there were three or four of us sitting around with him having a cup of coffee, and he told us that he had accompanied Castro on his first visit to Washington and New York, during which he was not received at a high level in the State Department, though he did have a meeting with Vice President Nixon.

Q: Castro was not received?

WILLIAMS: Yes, Castro was not received at a high level in the Department. This man was Economics or Finance Minister and he got all the interviews that he could around Washington. He went to A.I.D., and several offices in the Department of State. This I guess was in 1959. This was before Castro announced that he was and always had been a Communist. After my visit to A.I.D., I went to Castro and said, “Look, the Americans say,

give us a shopping list, tell us what you want and we'll do our best to help you out and give you what you need." And, Castro said to me, "Don't ask them for anything!" So, as far as I am concerned, these idiots who go around saying that we "Pushed Castro into the arms of the Soviets," they're liars. They know they're liars. It's still part of the left-wing mythology, the leftist propaganda that we are responsible for pushing him into the Soviets' arms! Gosh, I wish I could think of that ex-Minister's name. His name would be in the records somewhere and if I saw it I would recognize it immediately. He was fired not long after the first trip to the U.S. Anyway, that was my school year at Yale, which was really the toughest year I had in the Foreign Service. I figured to keep myself honest, to keep myself really studying, I had to go for the M.A. degree. The Department didn't insist that I do that. They wanted me to have a year of graduate study, not necessarily a degree, but I went for the Master's and got it.

Q: I would think that you put in some hard studying.

WILLIAMS: Yes, indeed.

Q: Was that just the academic year, Fall to Spring?

WILLIAMS: Yes. From August to June in '62-'63. After I got out othere was when I went to Uruguay and I arrived there in July, 1963.

Q: Yes. So, how did that come about?

WILLIAMS: Well, in my academic work in economics, I had specialized in the trade and development field, because we had some very good professors in that field in the Department of Economics at Yale. I was very attracted to the field of Trade and Development. This was an up-and-coming field, the relationship between trade and economic development, especially in the Third World. So that was what I concentrated on. They offered me this assignment in Uruguay as Deputy Chief of Embassy's Economic/ Commercial Section, and I was told that one of my major subsidiary jobs would be to

act as the United States observer at the then fairly new Latin American Free Trade Association, which was headquartered in Montevideo.

Q: Was that the reason for going to Uruguay in the first place?

WILLIAMS: Yes. That's the reason they wanted to send me there, someone with a fresh degree in economics to observe and analyze what was going on in this Free Trade Association.

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Q: I'm here with Mr. Williams and we're just beginning to talk about Uruguay and your postinthere. Say the actual post again one more time.

WILLIAMS: My job was Deputy Chief of the Economic/Commercial Sectioat the Embassy.

Q: And it was a fairly new idea, concept, configuration?

WILLIAMS: Well, no the job itself was not new, but the fact that one of the main parts of the job was to analyze the Latin American Free Trade Association. That was new, because the Association had been created only two years previously.

Q: Had it always been based in Montevideo?

WILLIAMS: Since its creation it had been based in Montevideo, because for the usual reasons, the Brazilians didn't want it in Buenos Aires and the Argentines didn't want it in Brazil and the Chileans didn't want it in either of those big countries. So, they all thought that Montevideo was a pretty good compromise. I mean for the same reason that the capital of the United States was established in Washington, DC.

Q: I see. That's helpful. So, when you went there what was it like? What happened when you got there? How did you feel about being there?

WILLIAMS: I'll tell you how I felt. My first impression of Montevideo was the smell of grilling steak. Everywhere you went in downtown Montevideo you could never escape the smell of grilling steak. Oh, boy!

Q: The beef from the Pampas?

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Where's the beef? Well, this was their own beef.Uruguay was a small version of Argentina.

Q: So you were just aware of that all over creation?

WILLIAMS: I was aware of that, because that was the main item on everybody's menu. The reason why you smelled it so often was that, where they were building or repairing buildings or streets or whatever downtown, the first thing the workers did in the morning when they got to work was to choose one guy, one of the workers who, rather than digging, would be cooking the midday meal. He would be grilling a large piece of meat and sometimes it wasn't beef. It might be a whole goat or a lamb or leg or side of mutton or whatever. He would be grilling meat of some kind and by midday, the time they were due to have lunch, it would be ready.

Q: Was the grilling actually done on the street?

WILLIAMS: This was on the work sites. They would have their own grills or framework. If it was a goat they would have the entire goat there. It was spread out on this steel frame over the fire or they would have a regular grill set up there if it was a big hunk of beef. That city was a really remarkable place for that reason alone.

Q: So you got there, well landed, literally in a plane? How did yoget in to the country?

WILLIAMS: Well, I flew down from Washington. I guess I went froWashington via Miami, I forget.

Q: When you were flying in, what did the city look like?

WILLIAMS: I was looking for the mountain, because the name of the city came from when some Portuguese navigator was going up the River Plate and one of his sailor's said in Portuguese, “Monte vide eu.” “I see a mountain.” So, there was indeed a little hill that could hardly be called a mountain, but it was a nice little port with a fairly narrow entrance to it. Too narrow as you recall. The Graf Spee crew thought it was too narrow anyway. It was a nice city. It was somewhat rundown and shabby. It looked as if, in 1920, it would have been a lot prettier than it was in 1963, but more prosperous, because things had been going downhill economically ever since the post-World War I boom. It was a city of over a million people, somewhere around half the population of the country.

Q: Wow. So, you got there when? That date?

WILLIAMS: In the middle of the winter, July of '63. The winters are not tough there.

Q: Not so humid?

WILLIAMS: Not humid, not hot, not cold.

Q: Similar to Madrid in some ways?

WILLIAMS: No, no. It's much milder.

Q: So, your quarters and the impression of this beef all over?

WILLIAMS: “Bife a la parilla” - I loved it. I lived in an apartment. You know, for quite a number of years I was really lucky, because every place I went, the exchange rate changed in my favor from the time I arrived until the time I left. I rented this nice apartment. The rent was in pesos, with a five percent annual increase, but I was perfectly happy with that. I had an entire floor of an apartment building. It was not a really palatial apartment, but it was a very nice one for someone of my rank and one where I could do some

entertaining which was one of the things that I had done to some degree in Madrid. I wanted to do more entertaining of the local people and get to know people, bring people together. So, I was able to do that. I had a dining room table built, because though nominally “furnished,” it didn't have an adequate dining room table, so I had one built. There was a cabinet maker who had a shop just up the street from me. One side of my apartment building was semi-circular, rather than being square, and my curved balcony looked out over the River Plate. So, I could see up the River Plate from one end of my balcony and down the River Plate from the other end. It was a beautiful view.

Q: How amazing. What floor, how high?

WILLIAMS: Fifth floor. Anyway, I had this dining room table made.

Q: What kind of wood?

WILLIAMS: It was a Brazilian hardwood similar to mahogany, but lighter than mahogany, and I can't remember the name of the hardwood now. The table is right down in my basement here, because where am I going to put it? Where am I going to put a big dining room table in here?

Q: Did you choose the wood or did the cabinet maker?

WILLIAMS: I chose the wood, because he showed it to me. He said, “I've had this wood out here drying out for five years and I don't think it will warp.” I told him I wanted a solid wood table, I didn't want veneer. He made it of four slabs of wood. The table is one meter by two meters, so the slabs are two meters long by a quarter of a meter wide and it's about two inches thick. It's sitting in my basement here, because I don't have any room to put it. I wish I did. I wish I had a bigger house.

Q: It sounds magnificent, really wonderful, but also something thayou liked, the look of the wood would appeal to you.

WILLIAMS: I loved it. My guests all loved it, because I wouldn't cover it with a table cloth, I'd just put placemats on it so people would admire the wood.

Q: So, how did he finish this off? Well, it really didn't matter suppose, just a very beautiful piece of wood.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, just a lovely piece of wood! Anyway, I did entertain. I started there to really entertain a fair bit, because my job permitted it.

Q: And even required it?

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this. I could have gotten away with a lot less than what I did, and I don't know if I would have gotten criticized on my efficiency reports for it or not. My predecessor in the job had not done the same amount of entertaining, but he was always spoken of highly. Anyway, I really wanted to, because I felt it was important to bring Americans in the Embassy and in the business community together, to get to know these people from the different countries of the Latin American Free Trade Association, as well as Uruguayan officials who were connected with economics and business. I really felt this was a very important part of my job. I got to know a good many people who subsequently, like Julio Sanguinetti, Luis LaCalle and Juan Bordaberry who became Presidents. When I met Sanguinetti, he was a Parliamentary back-bencher. He was a fairly new Deputy of the Colorado Party. That was the Liberal Party and the Blanco Party was the Conservative Party. He was a new liberal Colorado Member of Parliament. I got to know him, I got to know quite a few others. It was just a very enjoyable experience.

Q: How did you go about meeting or working up a guest list or getting to know the different people? How did you create some of those networks?

WILLIAMS: Just by going and calling on people. Also, I had help from a senior Foreign Service National employee. We use to call them Foreign Service locals and now they call them Foreign Service Nationals. I had one named Zafiriadis. There were two brothers

working in the Embassy. One of them worked for the Ag. Attache and the other one worked for me. A lot of these people he knew personally, but about the ones that he didn't know personally, he could tell me which ones were more influential and which ones were well connected and which ones that I could just forget about, because they weren't in any position to help us or didn't particularly want to be of any assistance or get to know Americans better. But most of them did, you see. That was the nice thing about Uruguay — there were so many good, nice people there. I guess you can tell a lot about people by what other nationalities in the general area think of them. Everybody liked the Uruguayans. The Argentines, the Brazilians, the Chileans, all liked them.

Q: Let me ask you. I'm thinking another way. Maybe this is a very broad question, but how did the Uruguayans think of say, North Americans in the '20's, '30's, '40's? How were we thought of as North Americans?

WILLIAMS: We were thought of as being very marginal. There was very, very little trade between that area. (Both Uruguay and Argentina) and the United States in the '20's and '30's. Back at the time of World War I, there was more trade, but their main trading partner was always England. That was their big customer. England had a lot of influence on both Argentina and Uruguay, and we had really very little. Yes, President Roosevelt did go down there in the '30's, and we had a meeting of the Pan American Union in Montevideo and one in Buenos Aires, but that was about the only time they ever saw any real American dignitaries. We didn't pay much attention to those countries, except when some big World Court case came up and some of the Latin American countries would get all over our case, because of our mistreatment of the poor Mexicans or the poor Venezuelans or something like that. But our relations were not an important factor for them, nor for us.

Q: What about German or French or Spanish influence?

WILLIAMS: Well, the Italian influence was stronger than German or French. The Germans had some influence in Argentina, but not so much in Uruguay, and the French, very little. There were a lot of Italian immigrants in the whole River Plate area.

Q: How, when, why was there a major influence?

WILLIAMS: Same reason they came to the United States in the late 1800's and early 1900's. They came just because things were economically very bad in Italy and then came World War I. So they poured into South America. You know this old joke about Argentina in which an Argentine is said to be an Italian who speaks Spanish and thinks he's an Englishman.

Q: When people poured in from Italy, would they have gravitated tthe cities or did they spread out to seek land?

WILLIAMS: Mostly the cities. I don't know, I guess it's hard to generalize, but if I had to generalize I would say they stayed more in the cities, while the Spanish-descended people were largely the population of the smaller towns in these countries. Now, of course, the Italians did get into the major cities of the interior in both Uruguay and Argentina, but mostly they were concentrated in the capitals.

Q: O.K. I interrupted you on the thought about your particular work, receptions, meeting Uruguayan people, trade, and your interest in the work. That beginning time was when?

WILLIAMS: July, 1963.

Q: So you began to meet people from the country?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. I met lots and lots of people and I really, as I said, made an effort to go out and with the advice of my guide Mr. Zafiriadis, I did zero-in on quite a number of influential people; people who had influence then, and others who later on gained more

influence. There were some good people at the American Embassy at the time too. In fact, my best friend there — we were really close at the time — subsequently left the Foreign Service and is now President of the New York Federal Reserve Bank.

Q: Who was that? You may not want to do that? WILLIAMS: His name is Bill McDonough.

Q: Anyway, a good friend. So, what did you see as your primargoal, or goals; how did you do your work?

WILLIAMS: What I did was this. Almost every morning, I would go around to one or more of the offices of the countries that were members of the Latin American Free Trade Association. This meant most of the countries of South American plus Mexico. I would call on them, usually having established a friendship or at least an acquaintanceship with some individual there. I would usually call up a guy and say, “Look, why don't we get together and have coffee or have lunch or something like that?” Then, I'd go around to talk to him and ask, “What's happening today?” I couldn't cover all of them in the same day, of course. Maybe I'd do two a day and do the rounds and cover all the countries at least within a period of two weeks. I tried to cover the big ones, Brazil and Argentina, at least once a week. Then I'd also call on the Uruguayan officials who were in charge of that area. Of course, in the Uruguayan government, not all of their economic/commercial type people were concerned necessarily with ALALC, as they called it. I would see most of the people in the Uruguayan government who were concerned with economic and commercial matters, especially when some question arose which was of concern to some particular American industry or some particular American company. I would just do my rounds and then I would come back to the Embassy and I would write up what I had learned. Usually there was something that was worth writing up. Then if it was important, I'd send off a report to the Department of State that very day, or maybe I'd save a few days and then put it all together into a more thoughtful kind of analytical airgram or cable. I just wanted to make sure that I knew about anytime anything important that was happening in the economic and commercial field. My boss was also doing a lot of the same kind of thing,

but sometimes at a higher level in the government, although not always, because I had a certain advantage. Let me put it like this. I was still unmarried and I very soon acquired a girlfriend. This girlfriend actually worked in the Embassy, though not in the same office that I worked in. She was from a very old and influential family. So I met a lot of people through her and her family, especially down in Punta del Este, the beach resort, in the summer time. You see, at the time, my title was Second Secretary of Embassy. That is not a very high rank. O.K. I was Deputy Chief of the Economic Commercial section, but my diplomatic rank was Second Secretary and that's just not high enough to go and call on a Minister or a Deputy Minister or maybe even an Office Director in the government, unless you have some special access to him. Well, I had this access to some of them at least. The Minister of Agriculture was a good friend of one of my girlfriend's brothers. She has several brothers, most of whom were major lawyers. So, on the beach at Punta del Este in the summertime, this young woman and I would stroll down the beach and she would wave to people she knew, and we would go over to talk to them. They might be very high ranking people, not necessarily in the economic and commercial field. It got to the point where I would make up a big gallon thermos jug of vodka and lemonade, of my own formula. It was very good anyway. It acquired a certain reputation.

Q: Sounds very good.

WILLIAMS: We would walk down the beach with that thermos jug and somebody would holler, “Hey, hey, hey, come on over and sit down and talk.” So, we'd go over and I'd pour everybody a drink and I would have a conversation with the Deputy Minister of Industry or with the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Agriculture, people that I could not go to see in their offices. The Ambassador would never dream of allowing me, at my rank, to go and see these guys in their offices in Montevideo, but if I saw them on the beach in Punta del Este, how could anyone say I shouldn't go over with my girlfriend to talk to them, especially, if we were invited over?

Q: Especially with the vodka.

WILLIAMS: Right. So, anyway I met a lot of people like that. Then there was this one old fellow that I met by chance. What happened was that my boss was going to call on him on some specific matter that the Department of State had instructed us to talk to the Foreign Ministry about, and this guy was the Chancellor, I believe they called him. He was the Administrative Head of the Foreign Ministry, an old guy, very distinguished, of Ambassadorial rank in the Uruguayan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Anyway, my boss fell that morning and hurt his leg, and he couldn't go that day, but the appointment was for that day. So, he told me to go and call on this guy about this specific matter. So, I went and called on him. Like I said, a very elderly, distinguished gentleman sitting there behind his desk, and here I am, a young guy not of an appropriate rank, normally to call on him. He had a bunch of antique guns on his wall and I'm an antique gun collector. So, I said, “I see you have a beautiful German Wheel-Lock and a Colt Model 1849 up there.” He was surprised. We got to talking about antique guns. We spent an hour talking about guns before we finally got around to what I'd come to talk about. Well, from then on we were friends. So, from then on, anytime the Ambassador or my boss or anybody needed to have someone talk to him, I was the one that got sent over there, because they knew that I had this entree. I could get in to see him on short notice, while even the Ambassador might wait a week. So, every time I would go, I would tell him my latest gun news, like “I just bought at auction a lovely old Colt 1873, .45 pistol that was ordered by the Uruguayan Railways in 1880.” He says, “Oh, could you bring it in and let me see it?” Anyway, that was the kind of relationship we had. This was just one of the many things that a young guy like myself at the time had to do.

Q: It sounds as if you were doing homework. You were doing researcand making connections in many ways.

WILLIAMS: I think I was doing research, because coming right off a period at Yale where I had read a lot of literature on economic development and free trade areas and customs unions, I felt I was certainly the equal of any of the U.S. or foreign representatives down

there as far as knowledge in those areas was concerned. They accepted me as an equal, even though I was not their equal in age or rank or anything, but they did accept me as an equal professionally, and that helped a lot.

Q: You had been doing your homework in all sorts of ways. Want to find out a little bit more about the types of trade that you or the American Embassy were involved in. Tell me a range of the types of trade.

WILLIAMS: One of the things was that some American companies were interested in setting up subsidiaries there. There were some that already had subsidiaries, meat packing plants and things like that. One of the major problems was the hoof and mouth disease, “aftosa.” Though it was prevalent in South America, fortunately we had managed to eliminate it in the Northern Hemisphere by joint efforts between the U.S., Mexico and Central America. So, North of Panama, North of the Darien Gap there was no hoof and mouth, but all over South America there was. Therefore, our regulations were very strict: no fresh, frozen or chilled beef or meat of any kind from South America. It had to be cooked or canned. Well, canned is cooked. They were very annoyed about our not permitting them to export fresh beef to us. They said, “If that's frozen, that's going to kill most of the aftosa bugs, and the British and the French import our stuff, so why won't you?” But we had a very strict law against that. For a couple of decades in the twenties and thirties we went through the exercise of eliminating of aftosa from United States, Mexico and Central America by just killing the animals that had it and burning their bodies, and that wiped out a lot of ranchers. If hoof and mouth broke out in a herd of cattle in Mexico or in Texas or Arizona somewhere, just slaughter them all.

Q: The whole thing?

WILLIAMS: The whole thing. The government would give them some kinof compensation, but probably not as much as they would like.

Q: Was that governed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture oanother agency?

WILLIAMS: Yes, U.S. Department of Agriculture, right.

Q: O.K.

WILLIAMS: So, anyway, that was one of the major problems that they were always trying to get us to change. They would try to hold up other things, you know, try to hold us to ransom in other areas. We favored the Latin American Free Trade Association for several reasons. One, because just as we had decided in Europe, that creating a larger market would increase economic activity and thus, would increase the market for American products, as well as their own local products, we had decided the same thing, although more tentatively, about Latin America. More tentatively because their effort was more tentative. We felt that it would be to the advantage of American companies to be able to, say, manufacture automobiles in Argentina. Let's say, have a plant in Argentina, import the radiators from Uruguay and the headlights from Chile and the windshield wiper assemblies from Paraguay or some place like that. These are not necessarily the exact places, but I'm just giving you an example. If we could do that, then it would be to everyone's advantage, because the cars could be sold cheaper and the American company could sell more cars. Of course, also the foreign companies, the Fiats and the Volkswagens and others could sell more cars too. But, our American companies would be selling more cars.

Q: I see. It sounds like a huge coordination problem.

WILLIAMS: Well, it was. It did get to be a big problem, but they were solving it very well.

Q: So, some of the companies were actually doing that?

WILLIAMS: Yes, some of the companies were doing that kind of thing.

Q: Which companies?

WILLIAMS: Well, at the time, let's see, who did we have down in South America? The automobile companies that I was thinking about who were wanting to manufacture in one country and import and set up parts manufacturing subsidiaries in the other countries ... well, Kaiser was the first one into Argentina. Do you remember Kaiser Frasier? Then, after that, there came a German company, Borgward. It's now out of business. Then Ford, General Motors and Chrysler established down there. Then, Fiatand Renault. There were a lot of other companies too. We had General Electric down there. I could go back and get my old directory of the American Chamber of Commerce and see who all was there. But, many of the major American companies had subsidiaries, small ones, in Montevideo. Of course, the shipping companies always had one problem or another, because, a lot of these countries were always trying to invent new regulations that would give advantages either to their own shipping lines or to the shipping lines of neighboring countries with which they had an agreement of some sort. These would discriminate against American or other outside companies. So, we had problems of that kind.

Q: How did that balance work, or was there balance, or were NortAmerican shipping companies pretty well screened out?

WILLIAMS: No. They were able to come. We had Delta coming down there on a very regular basis and Moore McCormack; and one or two others. They weren't screened out. Every now and then there would be some effort to disadvantage them. We would have to go out and try to help them. We could not complain if the government adopted a regulation which affected all shipping companies (or any kind of companies) in the same way, including their own domestic ones. But, if they tried to discriminate, that was when we went in and protested.

Q: Could you figure that out? Did you know it was happening? Wathis under the table?

WILLIAMS: Let me suggest this, that when we get to Argentina there is a much more fertile field to talk about exactly that kind of thing. Because, then I had a higher position and I dealt with a lot more important economic matters. So, if we can postpone that ...

Q: O.K. That makes sense. So, the vodka on the beach now, the coke, the 45's on the wall, not the coke 45's in the glass. The guns on the wall. So, that worked because you did have entree and other people and the higher ranking people maybe did not.

WILLIAMS: Well, you know, I had a guy in the Ministry of Economy who was — we got to be very good friends. In fact, later he was best man at my wedding. We were always exchanging information on who was in and who out and who to talk to and who not to talk to and so on. And, I'm sure he was treating me just as if — well, we felt very close, almost brothers, you know. Anyway, I really did enjoy my time in Montevideo, although it got cut short for personal reasons. I told you about the girlfriend I had.

Q: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Well, all of a sudden I met another girl. So, I sort of got to going with her and ended up marrying her. At that time, there was a rule in the Department of State, a very firm rule, adhered to by Mr. Crockett, who was the Assistant Secretary for Administration. We called it one of Mr. Crockett's crocks. This particular crock of Mr. Crockett's was that if a Foreign Service Officer married a foreign woman, aside from all of the formalities you had to go through to even get permission to marry a foreigner, you had to take her immediately back to the United States to be Americanized. At that time, by the way, in order to get permission to marry a non-American woman, you had to put in all kinds of information about her and her family and everything, and you had to put in your resignation. If they did not like her for some reason or other, all they had to do was accept your resignation. They did not have to explain why they didn't like her. So, I did. I jumped through all of those hoops.

Q: That sounds like a scary process, like a life-threatening process.

WILLIAMS: Well, it was a scary process. Although, my fiancee was. I think if anybody was a safe bet my fiancee was. First of all, she was very young and had not done much of anything. She was not a member of any extremist groups or anything like that. In fact, not any groups that I know of, and her father was an agricultural products manufacturer. He was a New Zealander, not an Uruguayan, and her mother was a German-Jewish refugee. The family had gone down to Montevideo before World War II. When I met her she was twenty-one and when we got married she was twenty-two. So, she really was a pretty safe bet, I thought. Oh yes, she was born in Canada when her father was up there working during World War II. She was a Canadian citizen, but also a New Zealand citizen, because of her father. Actually, she could have gotten an Israeli passport too, because of her mother. Anyway, as soon as we got married we were on a boat to the United States. That interrupted a very interesting process, which was an attempted recruitment by the K.G.B. The K.G.B. was trying to recruit me.

Q: Why?

WILLIAMS: Well, you know why. You mean “how”?

Q: Well “why,” “how,” “when”?

WILLIAMS: Well, “why”: obviously, I guess they wanted to get a new recruit, a new agent. I don't know what made them think that I might be an appropriate recruit, except that I was young, fairly young anyway and unmarried. Maybe they thought that that's the type — maybe I fit a profile or something, I don't know. Anyway, in Uruguay at the time, we had a diplomatic officers club which had lunch meetings every couple of weeks, or every month, something like that. At one of these club meetings, a fellow came and sat beside me and we got to talking and it turned out he was a first secretary at the Soviet Embassy. A very friendly fellow, and we got to chatting away. He asked me what I did and I told

him about ALALC (LAFTA, in English) and how I was our observer at ALALA. And he said, “Oh, that's very interesting, could you tell me a little more about that, because they don't like us over there and they just don't like to see us come in, and they won't talk to us or anything; couldn't you give me some information about it?” So, I said, “Sure, I'll be glad to.” He said, “Could you give me your latest — do you write reports periodically? You could give me your unclassified report on it.” So, I said, “Sure, I can give you that.” I was already giving such reports to several contacts. I was a good friend of the Egyptian Counselor and a couple of others who were outside of the Latin American area. So, as a favor to them, you know, to keep up contacts with them, I would give them, copies of my unclassified reports. So, I gave him a copy of my most recent report and he read it. Then, when he came back the next time, he asked me to lunch. He said, “I found your report very interesting; have you got any other reports that would bring me up-to-date, any previous, unclassified ones?” He said, “I'm not asking you for anything classified, oh, no, no, no.” So, I gave him some others, previous ones that would bring him up-to-date, where we stood. Then, he invited me over to his house and I met his wife. He was one of the few that Soviet Embassy people who was allowed to live outside of the compound. They had a compound; most of their officers lived there.

Q: About how many people might have been in the Soviet Embassy athat time?

WILLIAMS: I really have no idea but, I would say at least fifteen otwenty. I don't know how many others they might have had undercover.

Q: Would they have had people at the Embassy for many years?

WILLIAMS: No. They had more or less the same kind of policy that we did, fairly frequent transfers. I know that this guy had been there for three or four years.

Q: How long had the Embassy been established?

WILLIAMS: Probably, since the 30's.

Q: These reports, did they deal with agriculture?

WILLIAMS: They dealt with everything that the ALALC covered, which was both agriculture and industry throughout the whole region. I would concentrate more on the economy and the countries that were closer by, rather than trying to get into Mexico. Although, anytime the Mexican delegate had something important to say I would always report that.

Q: So, your reports would be on Uruguay, Argentina —

WILLIAMS: Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Venezuela. But, anyway this guy was really after me. Any contact with the Eastern European countries or any of the Soviet Bloc, we were suppose to report that. So, I reported it, of course, the first day that I had a contact with him. The CIA station chief there said, “Oh, very interesting, very interesting. Got to keep up the contact; let us know how it develops.” Be simpatico.” Later, the station chief told me, “You know, one of the reasons why we like to keep these contacts going like this, first of all, see where they're going, and second, because the guy may be thinking in the long term about a possible defection.” He said, “The K.G.B. has most of their people convinced that the American government, the American Foreign Service in particular, is just full of their agents. Therefore, if one of them wanted to defect, he wouldn't know whether he might be trying to defect to one of their agents who would turn him in. So, maybe he wants to get acquainted with you so he can make a judgment as to whether you are one of their agents or not, in case in he should want to defect in the future.” So, I thought that was very interesting.

Q: It sounds like an enormous maze, just enormously complicated.

WILLIAMS: Oh, it was. But, pleasant. I would go over to his house. His wife was a very attractive lady. She didn't speak very good Spanish, but she did speak some. We would sit

there and sip that very good vodka and eat caviar. Boy, that good old Beluga caviar. I've never eaten so much caviar in my life.

Q: So, the caviar was shipped in, I suppose?

WILLIAMS: Oh yeah, sure. That was not your River Plate sturgeon.

Q: And the vodka, I'm assuming —

WILLIAMS: The vodka was good old Russian vodka, Stolichnaya, yoknow.

Q: What proof do you think — doesn't matter maybe?

WILLIAMS: How about at least a hundred proof, I'm sure.

Q: Alright, so you sipped some and had the caviar.

WILLIAMS: Anyway, he gave me some books by Marx and Engels. I've still got them at home. I read them through. I really did. I found it most interesting, because I had never read much of Marx before. I had read only the odd article or two.

Q: Should I ask, in English or in Russian?

WILLIAMS: No, in English, published in Russia.

Q: I see.

WILLIAMS: Anyway, it was all a very interesting thing. Then, I got married and was immediately on the boat; so the last time I met him, he said, “I'm so sorry you're leaving, because I was really enjoying these contacts that we've had.” By the way, he had already let me know that he knew the difference between the various classifications. “Limited official use” was the lowest. That's not even considered classified, security classified, that's just “limited official use.” Then, “confidential.” He was already asking me if there

wasn't something else I could give him. He said, “I know your confidential documents are not really all that important, wouldn't you be able to maybe slip me something like that, of course only on the Free Trade Area?” I think I had been authorized to give him something low-classified just to keep him going. Whatever it was, I made sure I had written authorization from someone or other in the Embassy to do it, because I didn't want somebody to just tell me, oh yeah, go ahead and do it and then maybe later on I might get clobbered for it. I was still thinking about McCarthy, because when I came into Foreign Service, McCarthy was still active. Well, not very active, but still there. Anyway, my new wife and I came back to the States. That put an untimely end to a very pleasant and I thought a productive tour of duty for me.

Q: I see. The year was?

WILLIAMS: We came back in January of '66. I was in Montevideo two and one-half years total. There's one more thing that I think — it's such an interesting little thing that I think you might be interested in it. While I was still going with this other girl, the Ambassador called me in one day.

Q: That was Ambassador —

WILLIAMS: I think it was Wymberley Coerr. He called me in and said, “You're a friend of Eduardo Jimenezde Arechaga, aren't you?” I said, “Yes.” He said, “You know him pretty well?” I said, “Well, I've been going with his sister for quite a while and yes, I know him reasonably well. We're not very close friends or anything but, yes, I know him pretty well.” He said, “We want to nominate him to the World Court in the Hague, but we don't want to just come right out and do this without knowing whether he would be willing to accept the nomination or not?” I was thinking, “The World Court at The Hague, wow, that's a big deal.” Ambassador Coerr asked me to go and convey to him the fact that we would like to nominate him and see if he would be willing to accept. So, I called him up and said, “Eduardo, how about having lunch?” O.K. He was a big lawyer. He was a lawyer for

— I forget whether it was Coca Cola or Pepsi Cola, plus several other major American companies.

Q: Had he been recruited by them?

WILLIAMS: He had been retained as a local lawyer by them, becausthey always wanted to have a big name local lawyer.

Q: What about his training?

WILLIAMS: He was trained at the University of Uruguay. I don't think he had ever been to school elsewhere. He might have gone to school somewhere else, because many Uruguayans and Argentines did go to England for some part of their training, but I don't think that Eduardo ever did. Anyway, we had lunch together and I said, “Eduardo, we'd like to nominate you to the World Court.” His jaw sort of dropped open and he said, “World Court?” He thought about it a little while and he said, “Yes, that would be great,” or something to that effect. He was much more dignified than that, of course. He was a very dignified fellow, even with friends.

Q: His age about that time?

WILLIAMS: His age at that time would have been mid to late forties, maybe early fifties. His sister (my girlfriend) was early thirties so he must have been forties or early fifties. Anyway, I went back to the Ambassador and said, “Yes, he will accept.” So, he got nominated and he served a long — in fact I think he served two terms and became President of the World Court during his service there. So, I thought that was interesting.

Q: Wow. That's an amazing story. Was this before or after dessert,or main course, when you asked him?

WILLIAMS: I think it was over coffee. I think we had been chatting about general subjects, about getting his views on the Latin American Free Trade Association and so on. Anyway, that's just one of the things that makes life interesting in the Foreign Service.

Q: So, the Ambassador thought you would be the one to ask —

WILLIAMS: He thought that I would be the one, because of my closconnection.

Q: That makes sense.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, it did make sense. Q: So, he was off to the World Court?

WILLIAMS: Well, it took quite a while for him to actually get there, because there was the nomination process and then there were other people — you see, each area of the world has a certain number of places on the World Court, and he was one of the Latin Americans. I think there are not over two, maybe there was only one. I'm not sure whether there was one or two Latin American seats on the World Court. But, there were other candidates, I believe, from Latin America. So we had to get out and campaign for our candidate and say why we thought he was a good guy, and get some other countries on board. I think the Argentines favored him, because as I recall, they did not believe that he would rule against them in an upcoming case involving the border in the River Plate between Uruguay and Argentina. He would rule according clear international law, rather than nationalistically. I believe they were right on that. He was not the kind of guy who would make a decision on the basis of narrow nationalism, even if it were to the advantage of his country.

Q: I see. Would the Brazilians have favored him, do you think?

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure. I don't remember who favored him, but I think the Brazilians favored him also, because they would in general tend to favor an Uruguayan over a

Chilean or somebody from a country that they felt they had less influence on. Unless, of course, he was somebody who had really made them mad at some point in the past.

Q: Very interesting. You're heading back to the land of the big PSo, you and your bride are heading back to North America. You headed back to Washington, DC. You had offered your resignation?

WILLIAMS: Which I thought would prove to her my undying love. When we got back, I was assigned to the Department of State as Senior Economist in the General Commercial Policy Division of the Bureau of Economic Affairs. It is now the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. Then, it was just the Bureau of Economic Affairs.

Q: That would have been in — ?

WILLIAMS: That was in early '66.

Q: When you came back, you knew where you would be placed?

WILLIAMS: I knew that was what my job was going to be.

Q: And not heading back to Uruguay, to Montevideo?

WILLIAMS: Right.

Q: What did she think about that?

WILLIAMS: Well, she was perfectly happy with it. A young bride, you know. Actually, she had spent an year in the Netherlands as a high school exchange student. So, she was not frightened at the thought of living abroad. Her parents had moved in rather cosmopolitan circles, so she wasn't just a little country girl.

Q: Of course, a interesting family background; quite international,as you say.

WILLIAMS: Yes. So, we settled into Washington and found an apartment near the Department of State; and she got a job working for the Pan American Health Organization. She was a very good bilingual secretary. Having been raised with both English and Spanish. We had a four year tour duty in Washington and I can't say really that there were all that many interesting incidents that happened; but it was an interesting job. I was more or less “the world's living expert” on the Latin American Free Trade Association. At that time, there were two Latin American Integration Organizations. One was the Central American Common Market; the other was the Latin American Free Trade Association. So, I was the expert on that and there was another guy who was the expert on the Central American Common Market, and we were very much in demand as speakers. I was invited to lecture at Universities all around the country about Latin American Economic Integration. That was very interesting.

Q: If you had stayed on in Montevideo a little longer, a year, twyears, what other things would you have done or could you have done?

WILLIAMS: Probably, to bring about more open support by the United States for the Latin American Free Trade Association, because the U.S. Government was not formally supporting it at the time. The U.S. Government is a monstrous great beast and you can't get it to move very fast. I was trying to get the U.S. Government to openly come out and say, “Yes, we do favor not only the principle of Latin American Economic Integration, but we favor this particular application of it.” This happened after I left. Fortunately, I was replaced by someone who was interested in pursuing the contacts that I had made there.

Q: With similar training, or interest or background?

WILLIAMS: I believe he had a very similar background. I don't remember exactly who it was now. I just remember that it was somebody who I felt was a good replacement for me. That's really what I would have done. I would have probably done the same thing he did,

which was actually get the United States out in to the open as a supporter. Gave them their first computer, and so on.

Q: What about the — I guess I didn't maybe follow up on the beef and the “cooked and canned,” the meat packing business. How did that play out?

WILLIAMS: It didn't play out while I was there. It's just now getting to the point where it's playing out. Just in recent days, I have heard news that the River Plate area, or at least Uruguay has been certified as being aftosa-free. And, Argentina is just about to be certified. But it took them that long to actually do the tough things they had to do to eliminate the disease.

Q: That's a long time. Almost, three decades. Why was it sdifficult?

WILLIAMS: Because the aftosa virus is just hard to control. You never know whether there's some strain of it lurking in a few cattle over there in some remote area which might get transmitted because one of those cows walks some miles to another herd and transmits it. I don't know. I'm not an expert on that. All I can tell you is that it is a very, very bad disease and it is not something you want to mess with. This is just a trade barrier, you don't want our meat in there competing with your meat.” Well, listen, that's nonsense. We wouldn't want it in here because of the real dangers of transmission of that disease and the terrible expense that we had incurred to eliminate the disease, and that we would have to incur again if the disease were to be reintroduced into this continent. Furthermore, it's not just the United States. If we allowed the reintroduction of cattle, beef, or anything that might have the disease, the Canadians, the Mexicans, the Central Americans would all be furious at us, as we would be at them if they did the same thing.

Q: Do you think it was a matter of political people at the top or matter of education of the beef farmers, the cattlemen, or who?

WILLIAMS: I think it was all of the above. First of all, it is expensive. The cattlemen maybe don't report all cases of aftosa because they don't want their herds slaughtered. So, they will cover up if they can, unless it is a real serious outbreak and somebody gets wind of it. At the top, you have people in the Ministries who want to cover it up too. They don't want their country to be known as a country which has aftosa-ridden beef. So, I just think there were a lot of factors there that entered into that. One of my oldest friends with whom I spent a couple of days in Washington last week was the Assistant Agricultural Attache in Buenos Aires when I was there, and now he's the head of the Department of Agriculture's Office which handles beef, dairy products and I don't know what all. He's now a very senior guy. We got to talking about old times and he told me about the new aftosa certifications.

Q: That's just amazing. What about the situation of camanufacturing or mining or other industries?

WILLIAMS: Mining, oh boy! St. Joseph found a great big copper deposit when I was in Buenos Aires, which is a little outside the time we are talking about now, but they found it over in the Andes. They found this tremendous big copper and silver deposit. It came at a very bad time, because it was a time of transition politically, when things were tilting against us. So, they had to go away and not mine it. I don't know whether they have ever been able to mine it. That was one mining incident. About automobiles: from 1960 to 1970 in Argentina, when the price of automobiles came down by an average of five percent a year, because the Argentine government had adopted laws which required ever-greater local manufacturing content, rather than just assembly. In other words, when they first started operations, they would get C.K.D. kits, knocked-down kits, with all the parts and everything, which would be assembled there. Well, that's something like ten or fifteen percent local value-added. Argentine adopted a law saying that every year the local content must increase by some percentage, five percent or something like that, ending up about ninety-seven percent at the end of this time-frame. Anyway, more and more cars were being manufactured. More and more parts were being imported from other Latin

American countries. Prices were coming down. More and more people were able to own cars. It was just going extremely well through a period of time in Argentine history when for various reasons, the military was in charge most of the time.

Q: What about the quality of the cars?

WILLIAMS: Well, one of my closer friends down there when I was in Argentina ... we are jumping ahead now to Argentina, but I guess that doesn't matter. This friend was the President of Chrysler of Argentina. He said, “The quality of the cars that we make here is better than what we make back home.” I asked, “why?” He said, “In the first place, we don't have a model change every year. We're manufacturing the Valiant down here. We have been for several years and we're going to keep on doing it for several more years, the Plymouth Valiant. And we're just going to make little changes when there's something that needs changing, but we're not going to come out with a new model every year.” Second, he said, “The roads here are such that we need to make a tougher car.” Third, he said, “The quality of the workers here is just excellent. I'd love to have these workers back in Detroit, because they don't get drugged up and drunk. I mean, you don't dare buy a car made in Detroit that you know was made on a Monday or on a Friday. You have to look at the date of manufacture of the car and if it was made on a Monday or Friday, you don't buy that particular car.” He said, “We don't have that trouble here.” Incidently, did you ever read Arthur Hailey's book, “Wheels?”

Q: No.

WILLIAMS: It was twenty-five years or so ago, maybe thirty years; one of his earlier books, and it certainly backs up what my friend was saying. Anyway, the cars were good quality, the price was coming down every year and more and more people were able to afford them. So then, politics started getting involved in this. About 1971, things started going to hell in the proverbial hand-basket. For political reasons, American automobile companies began being looked upon by the new regime as imperialists, exploiters, and so on, when

this was so contrary to the facts that it hard to understand how sane people could come to that kind of conclusion. But, like I say, it was for political reasons.

Q: Well, we did get ahead?

WILLIAMS: Do you want me to go back to Washington?

Q: Yes. Let's go back and look at Washington. So, your wife waworking in the PAHO?

WILLIAMS: Yes, in PAHO. My main job was on things related to U.S. trade policy towards the developing countries. There were other people who were more involved in handling policy towards the developed countries, the Europeans, the Japanese and so on, although I got in on that as well.

Q: In Central American and Mexico?

WILLIAMS: All of the developing countries all over the world. I was not the only one doing this, but my job was Senior Economist in the Commercial Policy Division, and that covered a broad territory. I used to go to international meetings. That was one of the more interesting parts of that job. I went to GATT meetings in Geneva; I went to OECD meetings in Paris - Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development in Paris; I went to the meetings of ECLA - the Economic Commission for Latin America, and the Inter American Economic and Social Council (IA-ECOSOC). I went to all kinds of economic meetings as part of the U.S. delegation. Occasionally, I headed delegations to some of the smaller meetings in GATT at Geneva. On my recent trip to Europe, I dropped by there; the new, (well it's not really new) headquarters for GATT and the World Trade Organization is right on the shore of the Lake Geneva, a beautiful area. Anyway, I enjoyed that part of it. Our office tried to do many things. For example, when President Nixon came into office in '69, one of the first things we were told to do was to find some specific measures we could take to help the Latin Americans through trade. In other words, what kind of trade concessions could we make that would help Latin American countries to sell more stuff to the United

States that wouldn't get us in too much trouble with domestic interests. We were not told to steer clear of anything that would touch domestic interests; that wasn't it. It was just to come up with some recommendations on ways in which we could do specific things that would help Latin America. So I came up with a whole bunch of tariff concessions for their products, like tequila from Mexico and rum from some of those other countries, you know. I don't know why those things suddenly flashed into my mind.

Q: I was just going to ask you that. I want to back up just a minute. At the GATT and OECD, at those meetings, which would have involved world wide representatives, did any one country take the lead? Tell me a little bit about the dynamics of those meetings, the structure, the politics.

WILLIAMS: Well, no one country always took the lead; it was the individual delegates, and this was true of all of these meetings. The United States was often at a disadvantage at these meetings, because we would always send new people, new delegates, people who had not attended previous meetings. If they had attended one previous meeting, that was exceptional. Whereas, the other countries, especially the Latinos would send people who had been to every previous meeting for the last fifteen years, and they knew where all the bodies were buried; they knew what had happened. They would say, “Oh, but you people agreed to such and such back in 1952 or '55 or something and now you are trying to go back on that.” And we would say, “55”? We would have to cable Washington and ask, “Did we agree to such and such back then?” Then, somebody would have to do some research and yes, we had agreed to that. Anyway, we were always at this disadvantage. For example, when I went to my second meeting of the Economic Commission for Latin America ... I think the first one I attended was in '67. That was two weeks in Venezuela. They were held only every two years, so I went to the next one in '69 in Lima. I was the only member of our delegation who had been at the previous meeting. So, I had a lot of heavy negotiation to do there, because at least I remembered that far back. And, we're still doing this. Unfortunately, when a new administration comes in, they want to make sure that they're seen as being good guys, so they put in these new people, these

wonderful, nice young people with these wonderful, great new ideas, all of which have been tried before or thought of before. And, they want to give concessions so the other countries know that we're really nice and we really want to get along with them and so on. So we concede things that we really shouldn't be conceding unless we were to get good compensation; but they want to give things away without fair compensation just to show that they are really nice guys.

Q: We try harder.

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. Anyway, as I say we are at a continuing disadvantage. But, to get back to your specific question, the dynamics of these meetings. I wish I could remember what we were debating one particular day or what we were trying to decide on in a GATT meeting. I was trying to convince the people around this big table of our point of view, the U.S. point of view. By the way, I had written my own instructions. This is the way many of the delegates did, those who were in a position to do so. If you're going to head a delegation and you are the guy in the Department who handles this matter, you draft the instructions, the Assistant Secretary's instructions to the delegation, of course, drafted by you. Of course, you get the approval of the Assistant Secretary, or probably his principal aide, the Deputy Assistant Secretary or somebody, because the Assistant Secretary himself probably doesn't look at it unless it is something very important. You clear it all around the Department and make sure everybody is signed on, but essentially you are following the instructions that you wrote for yourself. I forget what I was trying to put across on that particular day. There was a guy there, the Brazilian delegate, who had been, one of the Brazilian delegates to LAFTA when I was there, and we had gotten to be pretty good friends. At a certain point in the debate, I remember I looked at him and I guess I really looked at him in a way to let him know that I was looking for support. The Indian delegate was arguing very strongly against us. He was putting great difficulties in our path. Anyway, I looked at this Brazilian delegate and he then spoke up in our favor against the point of view the Indian delegate was trying to put across. He really convinced some of the other Latin Americans that they ought to come along with us. So, when the vote came, we won.

I wish there could be a clearer illustration, but that is one illustration of the dynamics of such a meeting. I had not lined this guy up in advance, I did not have enough experience to know that you really had to get out and do a little lobbying if you're going to put across an important point. I thought, we would just debate around the table, that common sense would prevail, and the logic of our argument would be so good that naturally all of these other people would see it. That's the only instance involving dynamics in a meeting that I remember.

Q: That's helpful. That's interesting. It seems so over-whelming to try make positive policy and figure out how to put it across to new people and countries, each country having maybe an agenda of its own. How did you work with that? Just difficult to do?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes, yes. Of course, one of the things is that all of us middle grade Foreign Service Officers, as well as the upper grades, all of us wanted to be policy makers, not just people carrying out policies. We wanted to be policy makers, and often we got a chance to do it, because the higher-ups can't really focus in on every problem. Now when it is an important problem, you do need to flag it so the higher-ups can if they choose, look at it and maybe they're going to want more details. I remember cases in which I would send up a briefing paper on such and such an item that was likely to come up in the next meeting of the GATT Council or some other organization, and I would get a call from the Assistant Secretary's Office saying, that Joe Greenwald, the Assistant Secretary or Phil Trezise, whoever was in at the time, would like a more in-depth briefing on this particular question. I would go up to Joe or Phil's office, or whoever, and fill them in on it. Anyway, a lot of us did get a chance to be policy makers in a certain sense. Of course, you could say, these were the less important points; but you know, every point has some importance to someone in this country. When you're talking of economics at the international level, everything you do is going to affect somebody.

Q: So, as a diplomat of the State Department, how do you go aboubalancing all of those issues?

WILLIAMS: Well, let me tell you. Let me give you another example. This is one time when I almost had my head handed to me on a platter by Carl Gerstacker who was then Chairman of Dow Industries. Now, you talk about Dow Industries and you're talking major power here. It was to do with a plant. Apparently, Dow had made a deal with a Chilean, state-owned company to produce some petrochemicals in Chile in a plant which would be jointly owned and erected by both of these companies. They felt that in order to have the kind of internal rate of return they wanted, that they would have to raise the tariffs on imports into Chile of these particular petrochemicals from not only the rest of the world, but from the Latin American Free Trade Association countries. Some competing chemicals were being made in other LAFTA countries. I think Brazil was one. I forget the others. Maybe Venezuela. So, it seemed to me that this was going to undermine the principles of the Latin American Free Trade Association, in addition to burdening other non-Dow American petrochemical manufacturers; although, not to a great extent, because Chile was not a major market. It was a market to some degree, though not a major market for other U.S. petrochemical manufacturers.

Q: Meaning manufacturing, not consumption, but manufacturing markets?

WILLIAMS: No. I mean consumption. I mean importing the items. You see, this plant in Chile was going to replace a lot of imports into Chile from other places. But, most of the imports were from countries other than the United States. It would have hurt some American companies to some degree, but not too much. My big gripe about it was that they were going to raise tariffs, which had previously been lowered among the countries of the Latin American Free Trade Association, and thus undermine what I thought to be the principle and the practice of Latin American Economic Integration to which I had devoted several years. I had gotten to feel that this was an important thing for the United States — remember, I'm keeping American interests very much in mind here. In the long run for the United States, as well as for these Latin American the less- developed countries in our hemisphere. They are sort of like our nephews or something.

The way I got into this, was that my job at that time involved, among other things, signing off, or approving on behalf of the Department of State, any kind of loan by the World Bank, or financial assistance by the International Monetary Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank or the Export-Import Bank of the United States. This plant in Chile was going to be build partially with Ex-Im Bank funds. At that time, international trade came much more under the Department of State than it does now, and I was the Chairman of a group called the Trade Policy Committee. It was an inter-Departmental committee. We were the working level committee, and there was also a committee of Assistant Secretaries. If we found that all of the Departments of the Government could not agree on some matter involving international economics or trade, then it would go up to the Assistant Secretaries. But that seldom happened. I was the State Department representative and therefore, Chairman of this group. Anyway, one of my jobs, as I say, was to sign off or approve or disapprove of American participation in any of these international loans. The ExIm Bank loans were considered international loans. So, when the application from Dow came through for an ExIm Bank loan for this plant in Chile, I wrote a paper on it saying that the Department of State did not approve of the loan unless it was changed so that the government of Chile would not be required to raise tariffs to the extent proposed in the loan document. In other words, they had proposed raising the tariffs to a fifty percent level for ten years or something like that. So, I said, this is too much — there should be a maximum — I forget what I said now. But it was less than half of what Dow and the Chileans wanted. Then one day I got a call from the Assistant Secretary, my boss. At that time it was Joe Greenwald, a really good guy. I went up to his office and he said, “What have you done to Carl Gerstacker? He wants your head on a platter.” Apparently, they knew each other. He said, Gerstacker, Chairman of Dow, called him and asked, “Who in the heck is this guy Williams?” So, anyway what it came down to was this. I explained to Joe my reasoning and he agreed with me. We called Carl Gerstacker and told him he approved of my decision. He stood behind me, and I was really grateful to him for doing that.

Q: Yeah, you must have been grateful and pleased.

WILLIAMS: Anyway, that was interesting, because as you probably gathered, I'm a conservative. The Manu people look at conservatives as people who would do anything for corporate America, for the great big soul-less multi-nationals and so on. Well, here I had this soul-less multi-national wanting my head on a platter for going against something that they wanted to do. I think I'm certainly not unique in that respect. I know of some of my colleagues whose viewpoints were certainly more liberal than mine who managed to control their liberalism as I managed to control my basic sympathy for corporations that provide jobs for people. I think I can manage to control my sympathies where I think the basic interests of the United States are at stake or are being affected. Remember, the Department of State was, and maybe still is, one of the few, if not the only organization involved in international affairs that does not have a clientele, a specific clientele.
The Department of Agriculture has a clientele, Commerce has a clientele, and so on. Everybody's got a clientele. Take the Department of Agriculture. They really go out and fight for their clients. Sometimes the interests of the United States as a whole get lost in their zeal to protect their clients. We in the Foreign Service always thought of ourselves I think, as people who were there for the United States as a whole. We wanted to keep the overall national interest right up at the forefront of our thinking. I think most managed to do that; although, it really took a beating during the Vietnam era. Anyway, that was just one of the things that I used to do there. I remember I wasn't always absolutely right. I recall one time I torpedoed a World Bank Loan for a sugar refinery in Ethiopia, because I projected that the price of sugar was never going to be at a point where it would make that an economically viable project. It turned out, despite not getting a World Bank loan they went ahead and built it anyway. Several years later, the price of sugar went up to a point where it was economical. At the time it certainly didn't look like it.

Q: How did they get the funding?

WILLIAMS: The Dutch went in with them, because they then got a very lucrative contract to build the plant. So, they went in on their own. I thought at the time, they're going to “get in Dutch,” so to speak.

Q: Couldn't miss that one.

WILLIAMS: Sorry. Apparently, they did alright in the long run.

Q: What about the Vietnam era?

WILLIAMS: I just will never forget some guy going around, I forget exactly when it was, perhaps after the Cambodia invasion. I was in some office in the Department of State and I heard this guy going around shouting, “Impeach him, we gotta impeach him, impeach him,” meaning Nixon. And I thought, “What in the hell are you doing here in the Department of State? Why don't you get out on the street and carry a placard if that's how you feel? Just get the hell out of here.” I didn't say that, I wish I had. We had a number of people with that kind of attitude around. At least some of the honorable ones, like Tony Lake, resigned and — well, that's the thing you need to do if that's the way you feel. We've had some people resign recently over this tragic idiocy in Bosnia. Several of the desk people have resigned over that. You know, their conscience would just not allow them to participate. Actually, a couple of them, I think, resigned completely and others requested a transfer to some other office, because their conscience would not permit them to be accessories to genocide.

Q: So, you're saying if one accepts the post, carries the banner, ithe employee, then one has the responsibilities?

WILLIAMS: You've got to go along with the policy established by the President and his principle foreign policy advisory, the Secretary of State. If you find your conscience does

not permit you to do this then you should get out. But, you should not go around in office hollering, “Impeach him! Impeach him!

Q: You can't have it both ways?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: Wow. Alright. You were in on a number of policy decisions, economic policy? In those years, the world wide meetings in which you participated, again which years were they?

WILLIAMS: They were early '66 to early '70. Almost exactly fouyears.

Q: How do you now view your role in that area; what did yoaccomplish? Did you accomplish what you wanted?

WILLIAMS: Well, I can't really point to very many specific things that I accomplished, except maybe the Dow thing. I certainly improved that situation. But I was also a member of the U.S.-Mexican Joint Trade Committee. Are you familiar with what they call the Maquiladora concept? The so-called twin plants concept along the Mexican border?

Q: No, not that much.

WILLIAMS: The idea was that there would be a plant on the American side manufacturing parts and components and there would be a plant on the Mexican side assembling them. Those products, assembled on the Mexican side from American components, would come back into the United States under a section of the Customs Code called 807. This permits the import into the United States of products assembled abroad from American components, and when they come back they pay duty only on the value added by the process of assembly. But, let me tell you, the AFL CIO and other similar organizations were very much opposed. They were talking about American plants closing up and moving to Mexico and jobs pouring southward and so on and so on. Well, this was ridiculous. It just didn't happen. I kept challenging the chief economist over at the AFL CIO, who at that

time was a woman. It got to the point where she would not speak to me, because every time they would say something like that, I'd ask for a couple of examples. “Give me an example of a plant that closed and moved to Mexico; give me an example of jobs that have been lost.” She couldn't come up with any. That made her furious.

Q: Probably felt intimidated also.

WILLIAMS: No. She felt she was the one who was doing the intimidating or should be. Anyway, I think I did participate in doing some studies that showed that this was going to be in the best interest of American workers and industries, because the alternative was to import the entire product from Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan or Korea, manufactured entirely of parts made over there; whereas, we could get the cost of the product down by having it at least assembled in Mexico. After all, these other companies, the ones in Hong Kong and Singapore had a long way to transport these things. So, maybe we could get the costs of these products down to the point where they could be sold in the United States at a reasonable price, at a competitive price. We would be getting the benefit of having all the parts and components manufactured in the United States by American workers, rather than having the whole thing come from somewhere else. Anyway, that was one of the things that I think that I had a favorable impact on.

All of these interest groups were wanting to impose more and more trade restrictions, and having gone through that year at Yale and having read all of the material about the economics of trade, I became a rather convinced free trader. As I often told my friends, my year at Yale really put me at a serious disadvantage. It nearly destroyed my ability to believe utter nonsense. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people around who are not working under this handicap of not being able to believe sheer nonsense. Right here, let me say, I am a handicapped person. I'm going to apply for a special privilege or something as a handicapped person under the American with Disabilities Act. Anyway, I felt that I needed to do whatever I could to promote the long range best interests of the United States, to promote freer trade. Not necessarily fully free trade tomorrow morning. but

freer trade, ever freer as the years get on. As we have one round of negotiations after another, tariffs and other trade restrictions should come down, because it's been shown so very clearly that this benefits everyone. Anyway, that's what I was doing. I found a lot of satisfaction in doing it. The U.S. Mexican Joint Trade Committee, I think, did some very good work in the area. As you know, that controversy continues even now. I consider the NAFTA, it's the culmination of the work that I started doing. Not I alone, of course but, as a member of the Committee.

Q: But, you did have the training, the theory, but also the experience and so you really brought all of that to your work all along. Up till '70 then, all of that work and interest and some of your main allies or friends or workers, colleagues at the State Department then. Give me some of those people with you; they knew what you were doing, they were supporting you going along.

WILLIAMS: It became apparent very quickly which people we could count on to support each other, so to speak. The clearance process in the government is really something else. If you're going to send a cable involving instructions to an Embassy abroad, you need to make sure that all of the people, all of the government departments and all the offices within the Department of State that have an interest in that matter are aware of and approve it. So you've got to send this cable around for clearance to a lot of different places, and you quickly learn in such a certain office, you want to send it to Joe for clearance rather than to Jim, because Jim may sit on it just to demonstrate his power.

Q: Right. So, the more you worked there the more you knew the inner circle and some outer circles too. Moving on to '70, and I knew we're not covering all of it but, roughly, after 1970?

WILLIAMS: I went to Buenos Aires. The reason I went to Buenos Aires was because my tour of duty was up. Going to Buenos Aires was perhaps a mistake from the career standpoint, because I could have waited a few months and gotten an assignment

in Geneva at our delegation to the international organizations there. That probably would have been a much better career move, but unfortunately or fortunately, (I'm not sure which) I was not as attentive to career moves as I should have been. Anyway, Ambassador Lodge had been in Argentina for about a year, I think. He was appointed by Nixon when he first came in. He had been my Ambassador in Madrid. He called me up and said, “I've got a vacancy at the Embassy as Commercial Attache, would you like to come and fill that vacancy?” And, I said, “Yes, I would.” It just appealed to me to go again to the River Plate area and work for Ambassador Lodge again. He was hated or despised by many of the career Foreign Service people who came in contact with him only periodically. I got along fine with him.

Q: Why?

WILLIAMS: Well, first of all, he was a conservative and loudly so. This conflicted with about eighty percent of the Foreign Service people's ideologies. Second, they considered him a loud blow-hard and someone whom they really couldn't control. A career man who is an Ambassador will often be much more amenable to suggestions. Not necessarily orders, everybody takes orders, but suggestions and hints and so on from the desk people back in the Department. Well, Lodge was known to be a pretty much of an independent guy. He didn't really take suggestions, he would barely take orders; Well, he would take orders, of course. Anyway, he asked me to go, so I went. I enjoyed the tour of duty there. I think I accomplished a lot. I was there for five years.

Q: When did you get back there?

WILLIAMS: In January, 1970.

Q: In summertime?

WILLIAMS: Yes, in their summertime.

Q: Their summertime is — what kind of weather?

WILLIAMS: Oh, very nice. Sometime a bit humid around the immediatBuenos Aires area but, it's never really as hot as it gets here.

Q: Not Baltimore or DC humidity?

WILLIAMS: No, no, not that kind. It's very nice. My job there involved many things. First of all, I had to get into the American business community; I was a member of the American Chamber of Commerce there. Another task was getting to know very well the Argentine business community and the people in the Argentine government who were concerned with economics and business and industry and so on. That's a pretty broad array of people.

Q: Yes. I was going to ask you, who was in the American Chamber oCommerce; how big was it?

WILLIAMS: Oh, I've got a big thick book back in my office that I could show you. All of the major American companies had representatives there. At one time or another, a great many of them needed assistance with something that the Argentine government wanted to do to them. That was one of the things that I had to do. First of all, I had to try to help with problems that locally established American companies had with the Argentine government. Also, problems that exporters from the United States faced in getting their products into Argentina. Then, I went out on my own to look for trade opportunities for American companies, for American industries. Not necessarily for a specific American company but, for any company that could manufacture whatever product was needed. I will give you an example if you like. Fairly early in my assignment there, I began going out on the road to look at industries in different parts of the country to get to know the country. So I was on one of my visits up in the Northwest. I took my wife with me, because we would usually take a couple of days of leave in conjunction with these trips. She wanted

to get to know the country too. We were in the Province of Jujuy. by the way, my brother-in-law is a tobacco man and he says that a colleague of his goes down there often since they raise tobacco in that province. He goes down there frequently enough so they call him the Mayor of Hooey Hooey. Anyway, there was a factory, a steel plant up there owned by the Argentine military, a group of companies known as Fabricaciones Mitares. I thought I'd drop in and talk to them and see if there wasn't something that American companies could sell them. So, when talking to the director of this company, Altos Hornos de Zapla, he said, “Well, you know, you're a little late, because we just put out a call for bids for a rolling mill.” I said, “Did you invite any American companies?” He said, “Well, you see, this is a small rolling mill, and we don't know of any American companies that manufacture small rolling mills.” I said, “I'm sure there are at least one or two. Could you please give me a chance, give me a week or so or several days anyway, to get back to Buenos Aires and make sure that there are such companies and then allow them to get in on the bidding? Could you re-open the bidding if there is an American company?” “Sure, sure,” he said. “We want to be fair to you, but we just didn't know of any American companies.” They hadn't called the Embassy, of course. Anyway, on getting back to the Embassy, I telephoned the Department of Commerce. I said, “Who have we got that can manufacture a rolling mill of the following specifications?” I gave them the specs. They said, “We'll get back to you.” So, in a couple of days, I got a call saying there was a company in Pennsylvania that manufactured rolling mills of this size. We're talking about a thirty or thirty-five million dollar contract here. They said they would be interested in bidding on this. Then, I called the guys up in Jujuy and said, “Look, there is an American company that wants to bid, can you re-open the bidding and accept a bid from them?” They said, they could. Anyway, the American company got in a bid, then they ran into a problem. There was a special type of furnace that they had to have in conjunction with the rolling mill. The company that they had been counting on to supply that furnace went broke, so they didn't know where they were going to get that from. I heard about this from the Department of Commerce, they might have to withdraw their bid. So, I said to a guy in the Department of Commerce, Please, look around and see if you can't find somebody. We don't want to get a reputation

down here of being unreliable and here I'vtwisted these guys arms to re-open the bidding. Anyway, finally they did locate another company that could make this furnace that could be part of the entire package. The whole process went on for another three or four years. There were all kinds of little hitches in there that I had to help straighten out. Finally, the American company won the contract and supplied the rolling mill. That meant a lot of jobs in Pennsylvania. That was one of what I considered to be my accomplishment.

Q: So, the work was really done there.

WILLIAMS: No. The American Company exported the rolling mill to Argentina. The point is, I felt that, had it not been for me, a lot of people in Pennsylvania would not have had jobs.

Q: And the year?

WILLIAMS: It began in 1970.

Q: Talking about the time in Argentina, why were the Argentinofficials willing to wait for a U.S. bid?

WILLIAMS: They felt that it was to their advantage. Maybe the American company might have a lower bid, because that's one of the points I made. You've got this Belgian company and this British company and so on, but you might find that the American company will come in with a lower bid.

Q: Were there South American companies?

WILLIAMS: No, there were no South American companies bidding. There were none capable of manufacturing that kind of rolling mill at the time. I don't know whether there are now. Maybe some Brazilian company could do it now.

Q: Tell me about the rolling mill. What was it going to do?

WILLIAMS: It makes steel plate or steel sheet. You can manufacture steel plate or sheet of various thickness, depending on how close you set the rollers and so on. Basically, it's the kind of thing that your car is made out of. Sheet steel.

Q: Where were they going to get the raw materials? WILLIAMS: That was going to come mostly from their own steel plant.

Q: In Argentina?

WILLIAMS: Yes, in Argentina.

Q: In the Northwest or another part?

WILLIAMS: There and in another part of Argentina. Of course, some of their steel requirements did have to come from abroad, and I was trying my best to make sure that American companies got their share of imports. For example, let's say stainless steel. We would supply a good bit of that. Also, steel reinforcing rod, we had a lot of that going in there too. Basically, the rolling mill was a small one, because most of the rolling mills in the United States are used by major steel manufacturing companies. They are big, enormous things that would be three or four times as big as that one. But, that's what the Argentines wanted, you know.

Q: So it was specialized?

WILLIAMS: Special, and it turned out that there was only that one company in the United States that could make one that small. There were others that could manufacture bigger ones.

Q: What about Bethlehem Steel, would they be making raw materials ois that a rolling mill?

WILLIAMS: They would have enormous rolling mills there. Much biggethan the one that they needed at Altos Hornos de Zapla.

Q: What was the countryside around it? Was that mountainous?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: Northwest?

WILLIAMS: The province of Jujuy extends along the Bolivian border and the Chilean. It is the northwestern-most province of Argentina. Part of it is right up in the Andes.

Q: Was the language or the culture quite different from other parts of Argentina in that area? I guess I'm asking a more general, more broader question about culture differences.

WILLIAMS: Well, let me give you a broader answer. The answer basically is “yes.” But let me tell you something. I read a book on sociology in Argentina which said, in effect, that the boundary between Europe and Latin America runs through Argentina. It runs specifically through Cordoba, which is a major city in the interior of Argentina. By the time you get as far west as Cordoba, you're getting out of the area which is almost entirely European with Spanish and Italian and English influence. You're getting into Latin American which is the mezcal, the mixture between the Indian culture, the native cultures and the earlier Spanish. There is much less Italian and English, influence; that's confined to the coastal areas. I used to talk about this book with my friends down there, and even if they hadn't read the book, they'd all say,”Yes, he's got it right.” The sociologist who wrote the book (I wish I could remember his name now) said that this is the reason why Cordoba has always been a focus of turbulence in their society, because it is right on the edge, right on the border. That is where a lot of major movements, revolts or whatever, had begun and that was the reason. Indeed, that happened in 1968 and that was the trigger that set off the downslide that has only recently terminated. That was the so called Cordobazo, the revolt of the leftist students and union people and so on. You might ask, what has

leftism got to do with the mixture with the Indians and so on. Well, I don't know, I'm not sure whether the writer had a specific answer to that, and I'm sure that I have any specific answers. It is a point at which two cultures come together, and in some ways they clash; and people who want conflict, like the Leftists, can take advantage of this, and they did take advantage of it.

Q: How far was Cordoba from Buenos Aires?

WILLIAMS: I want to say about four hundred miles but, I'm not sure, maybe it's four hundred kilometers, maybe two hundred and fifty miles something like that.

Q: Is the geography quite different?

WILLIAMS: The geography, it's hilly country around Cordoba. There are some rivers there. Few of the rivers from there lead directly to the Atlantic coast or the Parana system. Some of the rivers vanish in the desert or flow into a lake or something. Perhaps it's not a real desert but, only salt flats. Anyway, there's nice countryside around there. Mostly it has always been a kind center for cattle-raising and that kind of thing; farm products of all kinds.

Q: Such as?

WILLIAMS: Corn and grains of different kinds wheat; soybeans, sunflowers. Anyway, this guy was saying you could trace the border between Europe and Latin America, right along there through Cordoba and when you get up in to the northwestern cities, Tucuman, Salta, and Jujuy, they are all Latin American; whereas, Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Rosario and Bahia Blanca are European.

Q: It sounds an extremely plausible theory. Not just a theory but reality.

WILLIAMS: It's always seemed to me that way. And, having experienced the country for five years, I really think the writer had an insight. I wish I'd thought of it myself.

Q: The language, are the shades of language and pronunciatiodifferences?

WILLIAMS: There are some shades, but no real problems with communication. We had a woman who worked for us in our home, she was our maid-of-all-work, who was from up in that area, the northwestern area. She was obviously a good part Indian. She was a good worker. We really loved her. There was no problem with communication at all. She spoke good, although “country” Spanish. Nothing wrong with that.

Q: Yes. I'm thinking it might remind us of people from Northwestern Piedmont, or just at the edge of the Blue Ridge as opposed to Chapel Hill.

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. That would be the same kind of comparison.

Q: Yes. Because we do hear shades of dialect, even among rurapeople on the east coast of North Carolina.

WILLIAMS: Sure you do. For example, the people down in Hyde Countwhere the high-tide comes in.

Q: Think about the first regime, the first time Peron came in.

WILLIAMS: He was actually elected President in 1946 with a great deal of help from Evita. Had it not been for Evita getting a lot of support on his behalf he might not have been elected, despite the fact that he had been Minister of Labor and had the firm support of union people. Anyway, he was President from '46 to '55 when the military revolted, even though Peron was a military man himself. He was moving in a direction that the military people did not like. He was obviously — well, he was a maverick, so to speak. A military man who became Minister of Labor and who then was elected President with

the undying support of the union movement. He did everything he had to do to build the union movement, not so much because he thought that was a good thingnecessarily, but because they were his supporters. They were the people he could count on. So he promoted industrialization, not so much for industrialization's sake but for the sake of creating more union jobs so that he would have more supporters. Anyway, Evita died in 1952. I'm not sure just what effect this may have had on his presidency but, in any case, in 1955 there came a point at which the military felt that he was no longer an asset to the country. The military in Argentina have traditionally felt that they are the ultimate guardians of the constitution and that when a president or an elected government is working against what they feel is the long range national interest, then they feel they have not just a right but a duty to step in and take over, which is what they did. So, they turfed him out in '55 and for a couple of years there was a temporary military government Then in 1958, they brought in an elected civilian government which was still very much under the military influence. I may be getting a little hazy on my memory of all of the succession of events here but, in the early 60's there was a dispute among different groups of the military and there was even a little bit of shooting there between different groups of the military. So, they decided maybe the best thing to do would be to have another election. They'd had an election earlier in '58 but they refused to allow the Peronist Party, which is the largest single party to participate as the Peronist Party. They could vote as individuals but they couldn't run a candidate as the Peronist candidate. Anyway, in '63 they had another election and a civilian government was elected. As many civilian governments in Latin America are inclined to do, many people in the government felt that they only had a very few years and they'd better make it while they could so they were pretty corrupt. They were going around trying to make all the money they could while they were in power and they were not governing very well. So, in 1966, the military threw them out. At that point it was General Ongania became President. He was the Chief of Staff of the Army. He was still President when I arrived. Under the military government, I'll say, things had been going reasonably well economically up until then, but things got even better because the military, whatever else you may say about them, they were not out to enrich themselves

to the same extent as the previous civilian government. Now, there was the odd exception here and there but, in general, they were adopting regulations and laws that they thought would promote the economy of the country - they were not necessarily beholden to the big landowners and so on, nor to the unions or anyone else. So they had no particular economic constituency to bow down to and try to do favors for. Things went quite well as I mentioned to you before about the price of cars for example and the number of automobiles manufactured and price going down and quality and numbers going up. More people were owning cars, which was very good. Then, I think it was '71, I'm not quite sure, I don't remember exactly what happened here but, the presidency was changed abruptly by more or less of a coup. A new and less influential General became president. In fact, he had been their military attache in the United States before he was suddenly called on the phone one day and told, “Hey, you're going to be our new president.” Anyway, then the more influential General, who was General Lanusse, decided that he wanted to be president. So, in the late 1971 and 1972 he was campaigning. The guy actually thought that he could be elected in a free election! He, a military man was going to be elected in a free election! Well, thinking back I guess to the fact that, after all, Peron was a military man and he was elected in a free election; but he had a constituency. Lanusse had no constituency.

Q: Where's he from?

WILLIAMS: I don't know. His family had a great big auction house and I think originally they were big landowners, but I'm not sure what branch of the family he was from. Anyway, he then permitted an election in '72. Peron was in exile in Spain at the time. You mentioned about Eva Peron's body. She was in a coffin on top of the piano in his home there in Puerto de Hierro in Madrid. She was lying there with candles all around her apparently. People who have seen it have described it to me. It was amazing. Apparently, she was very well embalmed. Anyway, Peron was not allowed to run. But, the Peronist Party was. They didn't repeat that mistake from '58. They did allow the Peronist Party to present a candidate. He was a dentist who was an old Peronist from way back. He was

Peron's designated stand-in. It was a very close thing. He got a few more votes than the General did, but not quite a majority. It was surprising to many people that the military did allow him to take the Presidency. Then, heimmediately started working so that Peron could come back and there could be another election and Peron could run himself. So this happened in 1973. The laws were changed and in 1973 there was the “second coming” of Peron. The Peronist movement has always been difficult to describe in traditional terms, leftist-rightist. It was based on what people normally think of as being leftist, that is unions, labor unions, except it was different here. Peron had gotten his political education under Mussolini in Italy. He was the Argentine Military Attache for several years in Rome and observed how the Fascists worked there. “Fascist,” of course, became a bad word and most people don't know it has a specific political meaning, just like Communist, you know. There are words that get thrown at others — “You Fascist, you Communist,” and so on. But the Fascist political system was based on the idea that people should be represented through the organizations that they are members of or through the classes that they belong to — for example, heads of households are a class which should be represented in the Parliament. Industries should be represented in the Parliament; farmers should be represented. In other words, you are represented, but you are not represented as an individual voter but by the group to which you belong. “The corporate state” is the usual term for this. You are represented by what corporate body you are a member of. This was developed or carried a little further in Germany by Hitler under “national socialism.” Most people forget that Nazi comes from the Nazional Sozialistiche Deutsche Arbeiter Partei. The National Socialist German Workers Party. Socialists, O.K. So, are they left or are they right? Well, “Nazi” is not quite the same as Fascist. Are they the extreme right? They are Socialists; they are national socialists as opposed to the Soviet kind of international socialists. So, my feeling on this as a political scientist, taking off my economist hat for a moment and putting on my political scientist hat, is that you don't have a straight line spectrum here. You have a kind of horse-shoe shape, where it comes around and where the two extremes almost meet. So, the extreme left and the extreme right are very close. I think this was the case with the Peronist movement, because he curried favor with

the extremes, the leftist terrorists. By the way, the extreme left, the Communist and the Maoists and the Fidelistas and so on (terrorists) were very active by this time in Argentine.

Q: Mostly in cities or the countryside or all over?

WILLIAMS: Both. But, more in the cities. They were trying to set up a base of operation in Tucman which unfortunately from their standpoint, fortunately from ours, failed. There was a lot of bad stuff that happened in Tucuman while they were trying to set up there, and that's a northwestern city where they had some sympathizers.

Q: Such things as?

WILLIAMS: Murders, kidnappings, actual raids on military installations. They would get two hundred people to raid and take over a military installation. Kill people and so on. Anyway, Peron curried favor with the leftists, making them think that he was really sympathetic to them. He was one of the few people who was able to deceive them, because after all these leftists are Communists. They are very cunning, clever people. I certainly won't take that away from them. But, he managed to fool them. He got their support. They supported him to the point of voting for him in the election and the election was free. We were keeping a very close eye on it; the Embassy was keeping a very close eye on this election. He did get somewhere around sixty-five or sixty-six percent of the vote.

Q: Was the State Department surprised when the people supported him?

WILLIAMS: No, we were not surprised. In fact, we were surprised his percentage was that low. He did come back. On the day he came back, there was a terrific fight. I mean a literally shooting war between his extreme leftist and extreme rightist (if you want to call 'em that after my little lecture) supporters at the airport at which he was supposed to come in. They got to shooting at each other. There is a book on that, but I've never read it. At the time I did not know why they had started shooting at each other, but they did. Anyway, he had to come in at a different airport.

Q: He was due back at which airport?

WILLIAMS: Into Ezeiza International Airport at Buenos Aires. He actually came in at another airport near Buenos Aires. Anyway, he straightened things out, more or less. He laid down the law; he said, “Look, you guys have to toe the line.” It took the leftists some months, if not a year, to decide that he really wasn't one of them after all. Although, he did turn over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to them. He had promised them the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the University, and I forget what else. You had these young Communists going into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and rousting these old dignified diplomats into the court yard and making them jump up and down and chant a pro-Peron chant.

Q: Literally?

WILLIAMS: Literally! Literally! These old guys were out there being forced to jump up and down and saying, “Saltan, Saltan por Peron Quien no salte es un gorilon,” “Jump, jump for Peron, anybody that doesn't jump is a gorilla.” The Communist called the military guys “gorilones,” or “gorillas.” So, anybody that doesn't jump up and down for Peron is a gorilla, a military sympathizer. These dignified old ambassadors out there jumping up and down at the command of these young Fidelistas and Maoistas and so on. God! I had some friends in the Ministry at the time who described this to me and it was just — well, what can you say? Anyway, for about a year Peron was the President, but he was in failing health, obviously. At the end of that time he died and by then the break between the Peronists and the leftists was pretty complete and the leftists who for a while had slacked up on the terrorism, went back to it.

Q: So, in the movie, the mothers of the “disappeared” — do I havthe right country, Argentina? So, who were the “disappeared” people?

WILLIAMS: Well, I'll tell you about at least one of the “disappeared.” My wife's first cousin, son of my wife's mother's older sister. They were a family of Jewish refugees who came to

Montevideo in '36. One sister stayed with her parents in Montevideo and the other sister met and married an Argentine and went to live in Buenos Aires. So when we arrived in 1970, one of the first things we did was to call on Loreta's aunt and her uncle by marriage and their two children, a boy and a girl. At that time the girl was about sixteen I think, and the boy was about twelve, maybe thirteen. Anyway, we would visit back and forth for two or three years. Then one day we got a call from them, the aunt and uncle wanted to come over and see us. They sounded alarmed about something. We invited them to come on over. So they came over and said that they had found in their daughter's and son's rooms some material from one of the terrorist groups. They were very alarmed at this, because they didn't want their kids mixed up in any terrorist gang. They obviously, didn't know how or to what extent they were mixed up with them, but they wanted our advice as to what to do about it. I could hardly give them any advice. I just said, try to find out whether they are involved — how closely they are involved and just try to talk to them. Try to see what it is that's driving them in this direction or if it's just that some of their friends at school had given them some papers and said, “Read this, you'll find it interesting,” or something like that. Well, I won't go through the whole story here, but apparently what had happened that both kids were fairly closely involved with the terrorists. The older child, the girl, was at the University by then, and she fortunately fell in love with a fellow student who was not mixed up with the gangs and didn't want to be. So, she dropped out. Meanwhile, the parents were just suffering terribly because they didn't know what was going to happen. At the time, the terrorists were going around killing police officers and military people, kidnaping American and Italian and British executives, and so on. They burned down the houses of a couple of our Embassy people and kidnapped and shot a guy out in Cordaba, one of our USIA people. Anyway, things were really frightening. After Loreta and I had left there and gone to New Zealand, we had a letter from them saying that their son, Miguelito, had disappeared. They knew by then that he was very closely mixed up with the E.R.P. terrorists. He disappeared and he never returned. So, there is one of them. He was not a little innocent idealist who got picked up just because of his ideas or something like that. His parents knew that.

Q: When did he disappear?

WILLIAMS: It must have been '76 or '77. Probably '76.

Q: So did the worst of it start, or the major activities start i'76?

WILLIAMS: Major terrorist activity?

Q: Yes.

WILLIAMS: Well, aside from the kidnaping of the former President, that was in '70 I believe, but aside from that, it started really in '72 I guess. It started getting got bad in '72. So, from '72, until after we left in '75, it was pretty bad. Apparently, Loreta's girl cousin got mixed up in the terrorism first and brought her brother into it. The parents never really knew that for certain because the girl wouldn't talk about it.

Q: Did the E.R.P. involve mostly young people? WILLIAMS: A great many University people were in it.

Q: Students and professors?

WILLIAMS: Students and professors. At one point, for example, there was a professor I knew who was an economist. He taught at the University of Buenos Aires. His name was Robert Aleman. He was well known because, he often wrote newspaper columns on economics. He was a conservative, though not what you would call an extreme conservative. One day, shortly after Peron came back, some guys with sub machine guns walked into his classroom and said, “Get out, we don't want to see you back here!” So, he left and he didn't go back. He was lucky they didn't shoot him, I guess.

Q: Was it possible to remain neutral? The disappeared would havbeen done in, taken away by whom?

WILLIAMS: By the military. As we've seen recently in the newspapers about confessions by some of the military people who participated in elimination of a lot of those people who disappeared. How it was done and all that. Apparently, there was a Navy base right there on the river, close to downtown Buenos Aires, where a lot of this took place. I just can't get too excited about it. We naturally sympathized with my wife's aunt and uncle over the disappearance of their son, but he made a choice. I know they tried to get him out of it, but he wanted to be a rebel, I guess.

Q: I was thinking, could they have been like gangs, say in L.A.?

WILLIAMS: Well, I think it's the same sociology in a way. I'm going to tell you the way they worked this business. There were a certain number of professors who were convinced Marxists or Maoists or whatever. Most of them, by the way, considered the Marxism as practiced in the Soviet Union as too tame. It was old fashioned, you know, it didn't go far enough. They were the Maoists and the Fidelistas. Many of their students would study to become teachers. They would then pick out the students that they felt were the most damnable and they would recruit them into one of the Marxist gangs and they would, after graduation, send them as teachers down to the secondary schools. They would contact somebody that they knew in the Administration and say, “Look, I've got somebody here I want to get in to a secondary school.” So, they would send them down and get them a job as teacher in a secondary school, usually in the Buenos Aires area, but also in some of the other major cities, Cordoba, Rosario, etc. Then, these teachers would teach the Marxist line in their classes, and would pick out the people that they felt were the best recruits. Then, when they got ready to go to the University, the teacher would call up his mentor at the University and say, “Look, I've got a couple of good prospects coming up to you now. Take these people in hand and I think you will be pleased with the results.” It was a circular process going on there. It had been pioneered for them over in Uruguay among other places. Among the Tupamaros in Uruguay.

Q: When and how and why?

WILLIAMS: Well, for the same reasons. The Tupamaros were just the Uruguayan version of the E.R.P. They were Maoists and Fidelistas. They had done the same thing. They had taken over the University in Uruguay by the late 60's. I was no longer there then. That's more or less the way those guys worked in Argentina. They needed a stream of recruits. Many of them were eighteen and nineteen year old University students. They had to be sure of them. There were some of them that they recognized right away that would not be good for anything except as supply clerks or people to operate safe houses, but not as members of the active gangs that went out on the street and killed or kidnapped people. But they needed to have teams who were capable of doing that. So, when they came across somebody that they thought would be good for that, they would send maybe two recruits out with maybe four or five veterans. They would have the recruits kill somebody. They would pick a cop or a military man, it didn't matter who. What they wanted to do was to have this recruit actually kill someone so that when the time came for him or her to kill somebody important they would be able to do it. They wouldn't freeze on the trigger or something like that. So, you had the spectacle of some forty-five year old police officer with a family of five who lived in a poor house in a poor neighborhood and who came from a low class background and to whom being a police officer was the highest thing you could ever aspire to, to make a salary and be respectable being killed by an upper middle class little yuppie son of a (you know what) who was doing it because he was for “the People.” He was in the Revolutionary Army of the People. What can you say! Girls were doing this too! It wasn't just boys, it was girls. There was a girl who planted a bomb in the bed of the Chief of Police and his wife. She was a University friend of the police chief's daughter. She was invited now and then to sleep-over at their apartment. She put a pressure bomb under their bed; so, when they went to bed, boom. It killed not only them but also an eighty-three year old woman in the apartment next door. A nineteen year old girl! I hope she was one of the disappeared and I hope her disappearance was painful!!

Q: Oh my goodness! What were your instructions as State Departmenpeople? What did you do, what were you supposed to do or not do?

WILLIAMS: Among other things, we were supposed to vary our routes and our times of coming to the office and leaving the office, but especially going to the office in the morning. In my office, I had to work up a little schedule. I'd say, “Tomorrow, Charlie, you come in late, and Jim you come in early. That kind of thing. And, I'll be here about such and such a time.” But we had to vary it a lot so they would not be able to pick up on us so easily.

Q: Were you afraid for your life?

WILLIAMS: Yes. It was always in the back of our minds. For four of my five years there, I carried a gun every day. There was a little dispute over that in the Embassy at first because, the F.B.I. guy and a couple of the military people there thought that us civilians shouldn't be carrying guns around, because we don't know how to use 'em. I said, “I'll take you fellows out on the target range any day and compete with you.” Anyway, I felt, as did many of us, that we wanted to have the option. If we looked up and found our car surrounded by guys with machine guns, obviously we weren't going to try and shoot it out with them, but we wanted to have an option in case there arose circumstances in which somebody tried to get at us and we did have a chance to defend ourselves. The Ambassador came down very heavily on the side of those that wanted permission to carry guns.

Q: Some did and some did not?

WILLIAMS: Some did and some didn't.

Q: What about Washington? Was Washington aware of how severe thingwere? Did they know and did they care? Your life was on the line.

WILLIAMS: Our lives were on the line and we had a request in — the Administrative Officer and I put in a request for a danger pay differential, a hazardous duty differential, which Washington sat on for three years. It finally came through after I left. They approved a twenty-five percent differential.

Q: Years?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, years. We'd send a reminder every time there was an incident involving one of our people, the Air Attaches house gets burned down or whatever. You see, this was the kind of danger we were exposed to. They would ask whether anybody got hurt. More often than not, nobody actually got killed or hurt. Anyway, that was the kind of thing we faced from Washington.

Q: It sounds extremely tense.

WILLIAMS: It was tense but, you couldn't let it get to you too much.

Q: I was going to say, how could you do your work? I mean every daknowing this?

WILLIAMS: Well, every day you just had to — not put it out of your mind — I wouldn't say put it out of your mind. I would say at certain times of the day you had to be thinking about it very carefully, but when you got to the office, try to put it aside. We had to be very aware of our surroundings at all times. That's what I always tell people now. Especially women who live alone or who travel alone a lot. You need to be aware of your surroundings. I would say that to you. Be alert to what's going on around you. If you see somebody that's suspicious, don't think, “Oh well, I'm just being too sensitive or I'm being paranoid.” Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean that people aren't out to get you.

Q: I keep thinking about walking in cities on a perfectly deserted block, maybe dusk or something. I can remember getting out and walking in the street, not staying on the sidewalk. I don't know where this was, Greensboro or Baltimore; but, yes, I know.

WILLIAMS: So you know what I mean. Anyway, that was the way it was. We had to be alert. Then one time I remember, we got an intelligence report that one of the gangs, I forget whether it was the E.R.P. or the Montoneros, was going to try to infiltrate the Embassy, and shoot somebody or do something like that, or perhaps kidnap somebody, through either the consular section or the commercial section because we had to be open to the public. If a business man or someone wanted to come in to my office, I couldn't just refuse to receive him. So, for a while there, we took it seriously. I had a .45 automatic under my desk. I had it fixed up with a little nail brace so that it was under the desk where it couldn't be seen from the front, but where I could get at it easily if it turned out that somebody was trying to do something to me. Again, it would give me an option, you know, if all of a sudden I looked up and I saw myself gazing down the muzzle of an Vzi or something. Well, I wouldn't necessarily try to shoot it out with him, but if I saw something to indicate that something funny was happening, I could get my hand on the gun fairly easy and unnoticeably. Fortunately, I never had to use that. In fact, only one time did I ever have a gun pointed at anybody that I thought that I was going to have to shoot. But it turned out that I didn't have to shoot him.

Q: When was that and where?

WILLIAMS: My wife and I lived on the fifth floor of an apartment building overlooking a park. Right below us, there was a T-junction. A street came down the side and T'd at the park. I wasn't driving to the office. What I would do was to walk down to a main street which was just about a block away and take a bus there, well usually take a bus to the end of the metro line, the subte they call it, and then take the subway from there on in. This was still Buenos Aires; it was not a suburb, it was the city of Buenos Aires, but was several miles out of the center of this big city. Anyway, my deputy lived about a half a block up the street from me in another apartment building. After the terrorism got bad I made a habit of going out on my balcony every morning before leaving for the office and I'd just look around. I'd take my field glasses with me and just look around the area to see if I saw

anything unusual. I had some shrubbery around so I wasn't all that highly visible, I could get behind the shrubbery and do a little surveillance. So, one morning I saw right down on the corner below me a guy standing there reading a magazine. Reading a magazine at 7:45 in the morning, standing here on this corner? There was no taxi stand, no bus stop, no nothing right there. So, I thought this was very strange. I watched him for a while and then all of a sudden he put the magazine under his arm and took off across the street. I saw my deputy walking down the other side of the street and the man fell in about ten yards behind him. I had an M-1 Carbine very handy.So, I grabbed it and I aimed at that guy's back, because I thought what was going to happen was that a car was going to pull up beside Peter and this guy was going to try to force Peter into the car, in which case I would have killed him. But, fortunately that did not happen. He followed Peter on down to the corner. He normally did like I, the same thing I did: took the bus, the fifty-five bus. That morning, however, he hailed a taxi and I could see the guy looking around waving and desperately looking for another taxi. He wanted to follow Peter, obviously. But, he didn't find another taxi. Taxis were hard to come by at that time of morning. So, he turned around and came back up the street and there I was with mseven power field glasses and I got a good look at him. I subsequently picked him out of a mug book. He was a member of the E.R.P. So, I told Peter to take two weeks leave, go somewhere, break this up. The CIA guys who were in contact with Argentine Intelligence said this sounded like about the second week of a three-week surveillance, because that was their normal practice, a surveillance lasting about three weeks on somebody whom they had intended to kidnap. This sounded like about the end of the second week. So, fortunately it wasn't the end of the third week, because if I'd had to kill that guy then of course I'd been in danger. Well, we'd have had to leave the country of course. Anyway, that was the only incident — actually — no, I just thought of another involving this same guy, Peter. This was months later. Peter called me up and said, “Ed, take a look from your balcony and look out in front on the grass bank of the park, in front of my apartment building and see what you see.” So, I went out with my field glasses and parted the shrubbery and looked over there and there were about a half dozen university-age people sitting on that grass bank. It looked

like they were just sitting there not doing anything. Then, I went back to the phone and I said, “Yeah, I see a bunch of people, a bunch of university types. They're sitting out on the bank there.” He said, “Now look, watch what happens when I come out on the balcony.” So, he went out on his balcony and immediately they all started chatting with each other and smiling and joking and everything and then he went back in and all of this stopped. They sat there and just looked. So, I said, “Peter, they may be planning something, why don't you come down here?” He didn't have a gun. I said, “Come down here and I'll give you a gun.” So, he walked down and by the time he got to my place, they had vanished. We didn't see them anymore in that particular place. Anyway, I gave him a gun and I got my gun and we put them under our jackets and walked out just to see if we could get a little closer look at some of them to see if we could identify them. We walked over into the park, keeping a close eye out and we didn't see any of them. All the ones we had seen there had disappeared. Apparently, they still had some kind of designs on him but, why HIM, we couldn't figure out. Why him and not me.

Q: What was your title and what was his title?

WILLIAMS: I was the Commercial Attache and he was the Assistant Commercial Attache. So, I really couldn't figure out why him specifically, rather than me or someone else. Shortly after that, his tour of duty was up and he left the country.

Q: Was he married?

WILLIAMS: He was married.

Q: Children?

WILLIAMS: No children. Anyway, we told this to somebody and they said, “You fools, you're going out there in a park with guns looking for terrorists.” Well, I guess maybe we were foolish. But, we just felt — I mean psychologically to sit there and know you are targets for these people is infuriating. They want to get you. I just felt like I wanted to do

something. I'm not exactly an amateur with a gun. Peter was, but he knew enough about how to use one so that he could have defended himself. I just felt like I didn't want to sit there and see these people just getting away with this.

Q: About how many North American companies were there?

WILLIAMS: A whole flock of them.

Q: Did you all look very North American?

WILLIAMS: Yes.

Q: Were people targeted for their looks?

WILLIAMS: Well, no because there are so many Argentines of English or German descent. Walking down the street, you'd be hard pressed to identify one person as Argentine and another as American.

Q: Unless you spoke with them?

WILLIAMS: Unless you spoke with them, yes.

Q: Oh my. It sounds a little scary.

WILLIAMS: It was a scary time. But, when my four year tour of duty was coming to an end and they couldn't find anybody who wanted to apply for the job to come down and replace me, they asked me to extend for a year and I did. I felt I knew the territory.

Q: What about your wife?

WILLIAMS: Well, she didn't mind. First of all, she could go over and visit her parents in Uruguay often, and her grandparents too. She enjoyed that. They were not at that time targeting wives, except the odd case where they would burn down somebody's house.

Even then, actually we got the impression that wives and children were not being targeted as specific individuals. Nevertheless, when we came home in the evening, we would be very careful always. We had a procedure. I would bring the car up to the garage door. I would get out on my side with my hand on my gun. She would slide over to the driver's side and be ready to take off if anything happened. Then, I would open the garage door, there was no such thing as an electronic garage door opener at the time. So, I would open the garage door with my key, and then I used a flashlight to look around inside to the extent that I could and make sure that nobody was hiding in there. While I still stood guard she would drive the car in and park it. Then I would close the garage door from the inside and go over to the elevator, operated with a key.

Q: From the garage?

WILLIAMS: From the garage. The door into the lobby was locked and you couldn't open it or operate the elevator without a key. I would be looking around with my gun all of this time while she was parking the car and then we would go up to our apartment. That was just a regular procedure. It was just one of those things we had to do and we didn't think too much about it.

Q: It seems awfully frightening. How did this happen, why?

WILLIAMS: The reason it happened was because the Labor Party was in power. The Governor General was an old Labor Party man who was a distinguished, elder statesman and had been appointed Governor General by the Queen; but, the Queen appoints whoever the Prime Minister tells her to appoint. So, this old Labor guy was Governor General. I forget his name. He was a Knight of the Realm. Anyway, there was a bad dispute over the budget as I recall, between the Labor Party and the other two major parties. It got to the point of total gridlock, and the government was being shut down over the budget question. The Governor General apparently came to the conclusion that the Prime Minister was leading the country down the path to destruction. Well, not destruction

perhaps, but things were going to get very bad. The Prime Minister showed no signs of wanting to dissolve Parliament and call a new election to have the people vote on the question of the budget. So, the Governor General exercised his prerogative, his royal prerogative as Viceroy to dissolve Parliament. The Prime Minister was absolutely furious at this, because it was a new election and the Prime Minister lost, the Labor Party lost the election. So, he wouldn't speak to the Governor General. “How dare you, you're a traitor to the party!” He replied: “Well, I'm an Australian first and a party man second.” The Prime Minister would not have appointed him to the job had he known that that was his feeling. He was a loyal party member, but more than that he was a loyal Australian and he knew that the country was being seriously damaged by the Prime Minister's headstrong stubbornness. So, he decided that the answer was to go to the country. Let the people vote. They did vote, and the budget question was resolved in a way that certainly does not seem to have been disadvantageous to the Australians. This was the only modern example that I know of, of either a Monarch or a Viceroy dissolving Parliament without not just the consent, but the recommendation of the Prime Minister.

Q: So you were in New Zealand at that time?

WILLIAMS: Yes, at that time.

Q: Was there much flack about what happened?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. There was a lot of commentary. Could this ever happen in New Zealand? Some people said, “Well, yes, I guess it could.” There are, and I guess there always have been, a few people in New Zealand who advocate making it a republic and taking it out of the Commonwealth but, nobody really paid much attention to this.

Q: So, as you went there you knew your duties would be ceremonial? WILLIAMS: They would be partially ceremonial.

Q: But, also with the economic business involved?

WILLIAMS: Yes. Also, there was another aspect to my job, which was Public Affairs in another sense: dealing with the newspapers and the television stations. The editorial comment and the news stories and so on showed very much of a leftist influence. In other words, anti-American. I noticed this very soon after my arrival, of course. It was hard not to notice it. So I started collecting clippings and I would put them in three piles. The ones that were favorable to the United States, formed a little, thin pile, I'm talking about after five or six months.

Q: Quarter inch, maybe?

WILLIAMS: Yeah. Tiny, tiny. Then there were those which were more or less neutral, a little bit bigger. And, those that were unfavorable, about like this.

Q: Oh my, yes, two or three inches high. That's a lot of clippings.

WILLIAMS: Yeah. So then, I invited to lunch the editors of the two major newspapers in Auckland, separately. I told them that I had noticed that overall, the commentary and news stories were presenting largely unfavorable aspects of United States life or United States policy or United States culture or whatever. And, there were very few that reflected favorably on the United States, and I asked: “Why is this?” The answers that each one gave separately were very similar. “Oh no, it's nothing like that at all.” And I said, “Well here, let me show you.” So, I brought out envelopes with my three clippings collections. I said, “Just take a look. This is your newspaper over the past four or five months.” They thumbed through them and then each of them told me: “I did not realize that this was true.” I said, “Well, why do you think it's true?” They said, “Well, the reporters that we get, this is what they're writing. This is what they think to be important stuff or newsworthy things.” I said, “Well, why is it that they think there are so many more unfavorable things that are newsworthy than favorable things?” Well, most of what I got was head scratching, I don't know. I said, “Well, these young guys come out of universities with these anti-American attitudes and they mix with others here who are also academic types or university types

who are the same way and its a vicious circle. I said, “Don't they ever get into the business community, the economic world?” They said, “Well, they probably don't.” Anyway, I did notice some improvement after these lunches, but not a great deal. Both of the editors told me, “We can't go around telling these people what to write or what not to write every day. If we tell them they can't write this, or must write it in a different way, they are going to go and work for someone else.” There was just a constant problem. Even after that, even though there was some improvement, every now and then when there appeared a particularly egregious example, I would clip it and send it over to the editors who were both friends of mine; they were both members of the Ruder Club and so on; and fellow members of the ?? Club, a distinguished club, you know. So, I would send the clipping over and say, “Look, what about this?” I'd point out some ways in which was slanted or tilted. Sometimes I would get an answer back and sometimes I wouldn't. Sometimes I would get the answer: “Well, I've called this to the reporter's attention and I've caught errors in fact or slants that shouldn't be there.” But, anyway there was just a constant problem I kept having to deal with over the entire time that I was there. That was a very important thing. The same thing with the television. It was harder because we didn't have VCRs, we couldn't record things. I would take notes, but it is very hard then to go down and say, “Well look, this is what the person said. These are my notes on what the person said.” It was more difficult, you know what I mean? Anyway, I felt that was pretty important too. I would try; then when I would go out and make a speech, if something particularly egregious had appeared in the press in the preceding week, I would say in my speech, “Now last week, the Auckland Star said this about us and that is just not the case.” Something to that effect. I would say, “The Auckland Star has slanted it this way or has made this error or whatever, or the Auckland Herald has done this.” Speaking of the Auckland Herald, the publisher, Joe Wilson, was from the old family that had owned it a hundred years. Now who was the movie actor that played the doctor on T.V.?

Q: I don't know.

WILLIAMS: Oh it was Robert Young. Anyway, he was often there, and as we were talking about celebrities earlier, I often had dinner or drinks with him, his wife, and the Wilsons.

Q: It wouldn't be Marcus Welby, would it?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, Marcus Welby, yeah. I remember him.

Q: Yeah? So what was he like?

WILLIAMS: Well, not like a movie actor. Not like you think of a movie actor. Just a very friendly guy, he and his wife. When we would have lunch at Joe Wilson's house who lived in the outskirts of Auckland, overlooking a beautiful bay and a beach. He had something I've never seen in a private home. It was a revolving, pedestal on which the dining table and chairs were placed. So, while we were having lunch, there was a beautiful picture window there and we would be revolving slowing around. Just like on the top of a —

Q: Top of the Holiday Inn?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right. That was really something.

Q: So you got this view?

WILLIAMS: Yes. But, then there were a lot of beautiful views around Auckland. The city is built on a series of old volcanic cones, most of which are believed to be extinct. “Believed” in quotes. A friend of mine, who was it now? I believe it was Colin Maiden, the Vice Chancellor of the University. Down there, the Vice Chancellor is really the Chief Executive. The Chancellor is a ceremonial position. So, Colin was the Vice Chancellor. He lived on the side of one of the volcanic cones. He told me he was out mowing his lawn one day and he felt the ground warm beneath his bare feet, and he had not felt that before. So, he was a little worried there for a while, but nothing happened. The official residence, where I lived, was on the top of a bluff overlooking Auckland Harbor. It was a very elegant street,

by the way, and I understand the U.S. Government has just sold the house for something like a couple of million dollars. We looked out over Auckland Harbor, a beautiful view, and out there, right in front is a lovely, symmetrical volcanic cone: an island. That one is not known to have erupted since the Europeans came in the late 1700's but, it erupted during the recent ancestral memory of some of the Maoris who were alive when the Europeans came. Of course, geologically you can tell that it erupted within the last several hundred years. Some geologists say seven hundred years ago, others say four hundred years ago. Anyway, when I used to take visitors to the island and we climbed up into the crater, we were thinking about that four hundred years, thinking it may be time for another one. It's a very volcanic area. The whole North Island of New Zealand is volcanic and the South Island is not.

Q: So the dirt or the ground really looks like what?

WILLIAMS: Volcanic soil, black volcanic ash, most of it. The Senior permanent British official in New Zealand was called the High Commissioner and he was the same as an Ambassador, except that he couldn't be called that, since an Ambassador is the personal representative of one head of state to another, and both of these countries had the same head of state: the Queen. So, the position is called a High Commissioner rather than an Ambassador. But, he ranked the same as an Ambassador. There was also an Australian High Commissioner there, a Canadian, and so on.

Q: You may have said this before. Your actual title was?

WILLIAMS: The Consul General of the United States.

Q: How many other people were in the post?

WILLIAMS: I had about fifteen people altogether. It was a relatively small post. The Consul General in Hong Kong, for example, would have had many more people; and, some busy

European posts, like Frankfort, Germany, would have had a lot more people than that. Like maybe a hundred people. I really don't know.

Q: For the people under your direction there in New Zealand, werthose people hired at the post or had they come recently to the country?

WILLIAMS: Now, when I say fifteen I mean both kinds of people. New Zealanders were hired locally, but the Americans were people who were just like me, that is, career Foreign Service, and were there for a tour of duty. I had tried to make their work more interesting, as well as more productive. For example, I'll tell you about one young man who was one of my Vice Consuls. I didn't think that I could do personally a very good job of looking closely at what was happening in both of the major political parties. During most of the time I was there, the National Party was actually in power. When I first arrived the Labor Party was in the majority, but they very soon lost an election and the National Party came to power. It was a more conservative party. I told this young man to go out and learn all he could about the Labor Party. To meet people in the Labor Party, both members of Parliament and union officials and others who were closely concerned with the Labor Party, to become our expert on the Labor Party. Oh, he found that work absolutely fascinating. I didn't need him to actually do full-time Consular work, but he did some of the Consular work too, such as issuing visas, and renewing or issuing passports, and doing all the other thousand and one things that a Consular Officer has to do. He very much enjoyed his work and decided he wanted to continue to do it after he left there, after completing a two-year term of duty. He then applied to become a Labor Attache at an Embassy in South America. So, that was what he adopted as his line of work. There was another young man there whom I assigned to go out and learn all he could about certain industries, particularly the ones that I did not already have close contacts in. Forest products, for example, fertilizers and maybe petrochemicals. He did a very good job with that. In fact, he did such an outstanding job. When he was about to leave, I learned that they wanted to send him as Vice Consul to Ouagadougou, and I thought this would be a waste of his talents. So, I called up some

friends in Washington and ended up getting him a job as an Aide to one of the Assistant Secretaries of State, and his career prospered.

Q: Where?

WILLIAMS: An Assistant Secretary in the Department of State. That is a big job in the Department of State. Each Assistant Secretary has two or three Aides, personal Aides and this guy ended up being one of those.

Q: I hope he appreciated your help.

WILLIAMS: Well, I certainly hope he did. He is now the Deputy Chieof our Mission to NATO in Brussels.

Q: Well, I was thinking, not only your ceremonial work and making speeches, and taking care of economic interests, but writing reports; you always did that?

WILLIAMS: Yes. I had an advantage in certain respects over the Embassy in Wellington who were also writing reports on the political situation, as well as the economic situation and so on. Several of the more important Ministers of the government during most of my tour of duty there were people and members of Parliament from the Auckland area, including the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister, in fact, was the Member of Parliament from the area that I lived in. He lived about three-quarters of a mile down the road from me, so I got to know him before he became Prime Minister, before the National Party won the election and came to power. He was then just a Member of Parliament. His name was Rob Muldoon. So, Rob and I would get together sometimes at my house and sometimes at his on weekends, because when Parliament was in session, of course the Ministers would go from Monday to Friday and the regular members would go from Tuesday to Friday, then they would go home on weekends wherever their home was, whether it was in Auckland or Christchurch or Dunedin or wherever. So, Rob Muldoon would come home to Auckland and I would be able to talk to him there on an informal basis. If the

Ambassador wanted to see the Prime Minister in Wellington, he would have to call up, get an appointment, go in to his office, sit on one side of the desk, the Prime Minister on the other side of the desk and so on. When I wanted to see the Prime Minister, I could call up and say, “Rob, how about coming over and having a drink?” No desk between us. There were several fairly influential Members of Parliament whom I could see on an informal basis there on weekends. I got a fairly good view of what was going on and sometimes it was a somewhat different view from that taken by the Embassy. As a matter of fact, very shortly after I arrived — you see, I arrived in March of '75 and the elections were in November of that year. I was looking around and talking to people and figuring out how this election was going to go. The Labor Party had a very large majority in Parliament. The prevailing opinion was that they were going to lose some of their majority, but they would stay in power. After analyzing all of the Parliamentary seats in my Consular District, the northern part of New Zealand, or the northern part of the North Island I should say, the North and Central parts, I came to the conclusion that, X number of seats in that area were going to go National. Of course, I couldn't report on all of New Zealand, but I sent in a report saying that I believe the following seats are going to go to the National Party and if this trend persists throughout New Zealand, then the National Party will win the election and be in power. The Embassy was reporting that the Labor majority would be reduced. Perhaps they would only have a majority of three or four seats, or something like that. Anyway, I turned out to be right and the Ambassador wasn't too happy. The Ambassador wants to be right when he sends out something over his name, even if its written by someone else. The Ambassador was a political appointee.

Q: I was going to ask you about that also, the political versus non-political appointee and how that worked and how rampant political appointees were throughout?

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this. The number of Ambassadorships that are in the hands of political appointees is usually somewhere between a fourth and a third of the total. The rest are career people. Right now the number of political appointments is higher than it has been during the past twenty years. There have been a lot of payoffs.

For example, there was this loud-mouth Congress-woman out in Los Angeles who got up and said, “Los Angles is going to burn down again unless you give us more money.” Her name was Maxine Waters. Her husband, whose name is Williams, was working at a Mercedes dealership out there. He used to be a professional football player, but he is now Ambassador to the Bahamas as a big payoff to Maxine. Well, you see, what they usually do is that they try to find places where they can send such a fellow where he can't do much damage. So, they figured this guy couldn't do much damage in the Bahamas. Well, that's been the general feeling about New Zealand. No matter who we send out there, he can't do too much damage if we give him a career man as a Deputy Chief of Mission. And, that gripes the New Zealanders in a way, although, sometimes a country will be pleased to have a personal friend of the President's, but they recognize the difference between a personal friend who is a political appointee and a payoff political appointee, a sheer, political payoff. You can't quite say corrupt, because its not corrupt in that sense, but still it is a payoff for services rendered to the party. Many countries do resent it, but New Zealanders, I guess, are kind of used to it. If the personality of the Ambassador is reasonably pleasant, and the one I worked for, Armistead Selden, he was a reasonably pleasant guy; formerly a Congressman from Alabama. Most of the time we got along O.K.

Q: It still seems that your diplomatic skills were tested to the fullest, the speeches and ceremonies, doing homework, doing research and figuring out many situations. That would call for many diplomatic skills, some of your best diplomatic skills.

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this. I never felt like that I was useless or figure-head or anything like that down there. I felt that whatever talent I had was being called upon and being challenged, frequently. I really wanted to meet as many New Zealanders as possible and to convey a favorable impression of the United States, to be friendly and match their friendliness. This included Maoris, as well as the Pakehas, which is what the Maoris call the Europeans. I tried to bring Maoris in and have them over to my house for receptions

and so on, but it wasn't all that easy. There weren't many Maoris in positions that I would normally come in contact with. I remember one incident that you might like.

When my wife and I first arrived there, our household effects, including some furniture, trunks and everything, were unloaded out of a container. There was a N.Z. Department of Agriculture guy there to inspect everything very carefully, to make sure that we weren't bringing in anything that was going to introduce some kind of a pest to New Zealand. They have enough pests there now. Gorse was imported from Scotland and has practically taken over the country. Thorns and prickles, you know. Anyway, this fellow inspected all of our stuff and we got to be friends, because he and I were fellow hunting enthusiasts. I would go hunting with him fairly often. He was just a regular employee with the Department of Agriculture, but he got to be one of my better friends. We would socialize with each other too, not just hunting. I remember the first time we went hunting down to the north central part of the North Island, the wildest part of the North Island. It was where the last Maori rebellion took place in the 1870's, maybe early '80's. The so-called Hau Hau rebellion. It's really wild country. There aren't any roads through a lot of it. The only way we could get to the place where we were to do our hunting was on horseback. We would drive to this little, tiny Maori village and my friend would hire some horses from the local Maoris and then we would ride ten or fifteen miles up in to the Urewera, which is a river valley. There was not another human, except the odd hunter, for miles. The first time we went there, my friend introduced me to some of the local people who are all Maoris. He introduced me first to the village head man. I don't know what he had told the people about who I was. He must have told them that I was some big-wig or foreigner or something like that, but I have no idea who they thought I was. But, when I met the head man, I put out my hand to shake hands and he took my hand and sort of curtsied and kissed my hand. I thought, jeez! I tried to act very dignified as this was going on and not to let him see that I felt this was unusual in any way. But, that kind of impressed me. Their English, back here in this little village was very, let me put it like this, it was very “country.” You could tell that it was not their main language. This was probably one of the

few places in New Zealand where they would speak more Maori than English. Anyway, they were nice people. We would sit around with some of them at least and drink a beer in the evenings, but they never came hunting with us. Our party would maybe be three or four guys. They would just rent us the horses and we would go up country and hunt and then come back with whatever we had found. That was a kind of interesting thing, I thought.

Q: They had their own village life and style?

WILLIAMS: Oh yeah, sure.

Q: What were you hunting?

WILLIAMS: Deer and wild boar in that particular area. There were other areas where we would hunt pheasant and quail and then still another area in which we would hunt ducks. But, the pheasants there, gosh. You know I told you I lived along a high bluff overlooking the harbor. It was not really a vertical face, but it was like eighty degrees or seventy-five degrees or something like that, but there was vegetation down on this fairly steep slope. One time I was looking out my bay window at the road running right along the edge of the bluff, and walking along the other bluff side of the street one evening I saw this family of pheasants walking along. And, here we were inside the city of Auckland. Pheasants were really good eating.

Q: When you brought things back did you cook or prepare anythinthere?

WILLIAMS: Most of it we would take home, but before returning home, we would have a sort of feast; maybe a leg of a wild boar or a piece of deer loin or something like that.

Q: At the village?

WILLIAMS: At the village, yeah.

Q: As a matter of thanks, or celebration, or what?

WILLIAMS: No, just because, well, we had to eat supper. But, we would come back to the village one afternoon and we'd start back home the next morning, and we wanted to eat supper, so we'd just fix supper and invite some of the locals.

Q: Did you prepare it or did they?

WILLIAMS: No, I didn't prepare it.

Q: Well, who fixed it?

WILLIAMS: I think it was a cooperation between my friend, the Ag. man, who was a good country boy, as expedition cook, and some of the locals.

Q: I see. It sounds as if they maybe enjoyed that celebration.

WILLIAMS: They did. We did too.

Q: And the beer, where did you get the beer?

WILLIAMS: Oh, it was standard brew from one of the big breweries. It was not locally made. The Maoris did have some kind of drink, let's see what was it called, Hockanui, I think. I'm not sure what it is, but it was not like the Samoan Kava. I really don't know what it was, but I drank it ever now and then.

Q: Was it strong? What did it taste like?

WILLIAMS: Yes, fairly strong. It tasted more like a not terriblstrong liquor or gin or something like that.

Q: What did they make it from?

WILLIAMS: You know, I don't really know what they made it from.Some of the local vegetation. I should have found that out.

Q: Well, this was not in my list, but I want to ask you a little bit about your wife's activities in Buenos Aires. Did it seem more natural for her to be at a post with you in Uruguay or in Buenos Aires than in New Zealand?

WILLIAMS: Ah, yes. Well, about that. She had worked all of the time we were in Washington. Before that she had worked as a secretary in an industrial company in Montevideo before we were married. She worked all the time in Washington, and when we went to Buenos Aires, she would work as a temp at the Embassy there when they needed a temporary secretary. I think I said she was a very good bilingual secretary. Therefore, she was in demand when one of the American secretaries would be transferred and her replacement wouldn't arrive maybe for three months. Loreta would fill in when they needed an extra secretary in some office; she would often be asked to do temporary duty. She was a PIT, part-time intermittent temporary. Then, when we went to New Zealand, I told her that I didn't think it would be appropriate for the Consul General's wife to be working, any more than it would be appropriate for the Ambassador's wife to work. She agreed with this. So, what she did was take courses at the local Junior College or, as they call it, the Technical College. As I told you, she did not have a college degree. So, she enjoyed taking these courses and that led her into later doing a college degree when she was back in Washington, by taking evening courses.

Q: That would have given her a chance to see, I was going to say lot of the locals, just people every day.

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. She met people there that I would have not met. I always like to mix people up at our gatherings, so she would have some of her college friends there with our regular diplomatic and business and government and other friends.

Q: That would have been an interesting mixture I think.

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes.

Q: And a happy mixture.

WILLIAMS: Sure. It was always interesting. The New Zealanders are not all that formal, you know. So, there wouldn't be too much of a question of class or anything like that. Indeed, I think her college friends and my hunting friends got along especially well. Q: Right. That's reasonable. Did you know that you would be leaving there when you did leave? Did you feel that you were accomplishing what you wanted to accomplish?

WILLIAMS: Yes, I did. While I was there I became Dean of the Consular Corps, which came about because of the sudden departure of one Consul General who was senior to me, and the death of another who also had more seniority. “Senior” is in terms of time in Auckland, because when you're talking about Dean of a Diplomatic or Consular Corps in a particular city, you're talking about length of service in that capital or that city. So, I became Dean of the Corps, and this was interesting. My duties were simple any time the Consular Corps as a whole needed to approach the government, whether the city government or the national government, it was up to the Dean to do the talking. The other thing that I had to do was to appear at all the National Day parties, or cocktails or lunches or whatever, and give the toast to the Head of State and to the country. I would have gone anyway.

Q: You have to be a good thinker and a good speaker to think on youfeet. Whether you had a prepared speech or not you still have to think.

WILLIAMS: Oh, I forgot to mention my Fourth of July parties. I'd have a party ever Fourth of July and invite a lot of people! The first year I did it at the residence, but there were too many people. It was obviously over-crowded. So, from then on I did it at one of the local establishments which catered to party functions. That was fun too. I got to invite a lot of people. I think I mentioned this before, we entertained a lot! We had these standard

fourteen- person dinners at home. A table for eight and a table for six in two different rooms in our house. At some point during the dinner we would change places. I would start at the table of eight and Loreta would start at the table of six and then we would switch places at some point. Between the last course and the dessert, perhaps. I enjoyed that part and so did Loreta. She really enjoyed it.

Q: I was going to ask you about that.

WILLIAMS: She enjoyed it. She was a good hostess. She reallenjoyed everything to do with having a party, having people in.

Q: I think it would be much easier to be in the post to do those jobs if you enjoyed it, if you liked it. You would really have to enjoy it. What else about your being there did you like, or not like? What were any unusual circumstances?

WILLIAMS: Well, I think I've covered just about everything I can think of. In general, I enjoyed the job. I felt that maybe I should try to get a job from then on as a Consul General at a bigger post, but that didn't work out. I just felt that, in general, I was pleased with the work that I had done there and my accomplishments. But, still I felt that neither the job that I did nor the country as a whole was enough appreciated by Washington.

Q: It sounds as if not, because after all you had the economic training, the academic training, but also you had been there. Also, you made it your business to find out what made people tick and what people were thinking. To make connections, I see you as an enabler and you took on those roles willingly and well.

WILLIAMS: It's all very flattering, but I think it's all true. I'll have to say its all the truth. But, I think as a country of three and one-half million people, and thirty million sheep, I think probably Washington just really didn't feel like this was a terribly important place. I tried to raise their consciousness about Auckland as a commercial center, and to some degree I think I succeeded, but not to a great degree. As far as they were concerned,

Auckland was more similar to Perth and Brisbane than it was to Sydney. I felt that was unfortunate, because I thought it had a lot of potential. For a country of three and one-half million people it had a lot; it was a relatively high income country. I felt it had a lot more potential in general than Washington (and I'm lumping together the Department of State, Department of Commerce, S.T.R. and so on) was willing to or able to realize. But, its really hard not just to change Washington's mind about anything, but to bring things into their consciousness, to get something on to their radar screen. It's very difficult.

Q: I'm thinking perhaps in many or all walks of life it may be very hard to disabuse people of certain ideas if someone's bent on thinking a certain way. It's very hard.

WILLIAMS: One thing that happened while I was there, which I just remembered, was the nuclear controversy. The entire Left in New Zealand was on to this idiotical anti-nuclear kick. At that time the extreme Left, the Communists in New Zealand supported Labor because the political Communist Party there had little chance of winning a seat, or maybe more than one seat, in Parliament. So, they supported the Labor Party. But there were two wings of the Communist Party. There was the Chinese wing and there was the Soviet wing. The Labor Party in general was not that far Left. Of course, they were always being attacked from the Left for not being far enough Left. But, oh this nuclear thing, the far Left was able to convince a lot of people from the moderate Left that everything nuclear was bad. This was part of the unilateral disarmament drive that was being conducted here in the United States under the auspices of the Soviet-dominated U.S. Peace Council, which was a branch of the World Peace Council, which was a Soviet tool, propaganda tool. And they were pretty effective. Their branch in New Zealand was quite effective. “Everything nuclear is bad, except of course the Soviet Union, but then we don't want to talk about that.” Anyway, there was a move on foot to try to keep American nuclear-powered navy vessels out of the ports. Later, this was successful, but not while I was there. For example, we had a visit from the cruiser Long Beach which is nuclear powered and, of course was nuclear armed, although we never admitted it. We would not admit publicly whether any particular ship carried nuclear weapons or not. We would neither confirm nor deny. That

was the policy. But, when the Long Beach was coming in, the Labor members of the City Council wanted to forbid them to enter the port of Auckland. I had to go around and do some lobbying with some members of the City Council to convince them that this was just not the way to go, and explain what the effect would likely be on U.S. policy towards New Zealand across the board. The Mayor, Sir Dove- Meyer Robinson was very much against the idea of banning nuclear or any other kind of ships from the harbor, because there was absolutely zero indication that there was any danger to anyone from the presence of a nuclear ship. The Leftists were saying, “Well, if the American nuclear ships come here, there might be a leak, or it might cause the Soviets to target us if a war came along, and blah, blah.” Anyway, a bunch of little boats got out there and tried to block the entrance to the harbor, but without success, and there was a lot of hoopla about that. Then when the cruiser came in, all the seamen who were going to be able to go on leave signed up at a little booth down on the dock. They all signed up saying, if invited, they would like to go to a home. Well, I think there were about two thousand seamen and there were four thousand invitations. I mean, the people just opened their arms to this big group of sailors coming in there. It was just overwhelming — the hospitality with which they were greeted by the ordinary New Zealanders. I think that a lot of these were probably members of the Labor Party who at that time at least didn't agree with their leaders. But, then after I left, the Parliament passed a law forbidding the entry of naval vessels unless the government of that country would guarantee that it was not nuclear armed and that it was not nuclear powered. This was a sort of sop thrown by the main stream Labor Party to their extreme left fringe. I guess they figured they had to do something for these idiots off there in the fringe. So, that was the sop that they threw them and it is still in effect and it really had a bad affect on U.S.-New Zealand relations for years. We said, first of all we would no longer be able to continue treaty relations in the ANZUS Treaty with New Zealand if they were not going to allow our naval vessels in there. So, instead of the ANZUS Treaty, it became the Australia-U.S. Treaty. The Australians were angry at them too. Then the U.S. Government declined to receive any high-level visitors from New Zealand in Washington while this was in effect. We said we were not going to send any high-level people to New Zealand,

because New Zealand had broken our treaty; had disregarded the good relations that had persisted since World War II; New Zealand had forgotten about the Coral Sea, etc. etc. Anyway, only recently has our policy changed. We are now receiving high-level visitors from down there. This caused a real interruption in good relations with New Zealand. I was very sorry to see it happen.

Q: About how long was this after you'd left?

WILLIAMS: I think it was maybe a year or two after I left that this happened. But, you know, the sheer idiocy of this policy was illustrated while I was there. I remember Colin Maiden, the Vice Chancellor of the University, told me that they wanted to set up a laboratory to do some experiments on nuclear isotopes that are used in medicine.

Q: I was thinking of radioactive.

WILLIAMS: Radioactive, yes. Anyway, the academic community went up in arms: “This nuclear, oh God, this is nuclear! This is atomic! We can't have that.” So, their research in this area of the use of nuclear isotopes in medicine was completely stopped, because these Left wing idiots felt that this would undermine their whole anti-nuclear concept.

Q: There are hospitals that have partly nuclear medicine. I can remember seeing that on doors in hospitals when I was doing some work in Baltimore and there was nuclear medicine.

WILLIAMS: Sure. This was just ideological idiocy, that kind othing.

Q: So, you simply headed back across the water again, this time, tOttawa?

WILLIAMS: Yes, right, in Ottawa as a Counselor of Embassy for Commercial Affairs. I found living in Ottawa, in general, a very pleasant experience. It was not actually the job that I wanted. I had wanted another job in Latin America, but apparently that got filled before I was able to grab it. Anyway, Ottawa turned out to be a very interesting

experience, because after all, here I was in charge of Commercial Affairs at the Embassy, and Canada is by far our largest trading partner. That tends to generate problems, large and small. Indeed, during my tenure there, there were many large and small problems. They were easier to handle in a certain sense, because Ottawa is right on an airline from Washington through Pittsburgh, and you get people up from Washington. Delegations to talk about this or that trade problem. So, I didn't have to do as much negotiating on my own as I did, for example in Buenos Aires, because it's harder to get people down there from Washington, so the Embassy has to do more of the negotiating. Still, there were enough problems to go around, smaller problems. Of course, we made a start at the time on what later became the NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Area. We started the conversations and negotiations that led eventually right directly to NAFTA.

Q: I feel that it's of such importance that maybe we should try at another time to pick it up. Let's try to pick that up another day if that's alright with you.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, sure.

Q: I'm most grateful to you for the time and we'll pick it up, Gowilling, and the Queen and everybody.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, God willing and the creek don't rise.

—

Q: Talking about the ANZAC Ceremony, Mr. Williams, when you werthere, just before dawn. Where was it?

WILLIAMS: At the ANZAC Monument, which was outdoors in a park in Auckland. Several government ministers would be there, and the Mayor, and the Admiral in charge of the Navy up there, and the General in charge of the Army in that area. By the way, I should emphasize that Wellington, of course, is the political capital of New Zealand. The

Parliament meets there, but Auckland is the every other kind of capital. It is the business, economic, cultural, media, and so on, capital of New Zealand. It is a much bigger city. It is over twice as big as Wellington.

Q: About the size when you were there, say '75?

WILLIAMS: Mid-70's. Greater Auckland was over eight hundrethousand people, something like that.

Q: And Wellington?

WILLIAMS: Greater Wellington, including the Hutt Valley, and so on,was three hundred and fifty thousand, four hundred thousand perhaps.

Q: When you were there earlier on the Fulbright, was there mucchange from earlier time to your period as Consul General?

WILLIAMS: Very great changes.

Q: In what ways?

WILLIAMS: Well, they had gotten more sophisticated socially, and economically there had been a lot of change, much improvement. Socially, I'm not sure that the changes were all improvements, but when I was there in the 70's there were automobile assembly plants, there was a major steel mill, there were plants manufacturing household appliances, radios and T.V.'s, refrigerators and stoves and all that good stuff.

Q: What companies? Who was doing this manufacturing?

WILLIAMS: Most of them were British-owned companies and most were subsidiaries of Australian companies; but there were some American companies there too. Not too many, and this was one of my major problems. The American business community was fairly

small and actually, I was sent there to do something about that. They told me that they wanted Auckland to be converted into a commercial post. I was an Economic/Commercial Officer, so those were my marking orders. And I did it. The way I did it was mostly by getting the small American business community together and getting some representatives over from Australia to talk about increasing activity in New Zealand. These were American business representatives, you see, because some American companies had branches or subsidiaries in Australia, but didn't have them in New Zealand at that time. One of the things that I did was American Pavilions at trade shows. Once I put on an entirely American Trade Fair, with no support from the Department of Commerce. Ihad to do it strictly on whatever I could beg, borrow or steal. It was mostly from the support of the American business community. I just got them together and said, “Look fellows, let's do a Trade Fair, and get your headquarters in the United States to send actual products, not just catalogs.” We put on catalog shows too.

Q: So, that was an undertaking?

WILLIAMS: That really was an undertaking, yes. I think it was pretty successful. Sales of American products increased by a fair percentage. I was always trying to promote two-way trade. One of my big jobs or big parts of my job was to go around and talk to organizations all over my district. The Embassy handled everything from just about the bottom third of the North Island on down and I handled everything from there on up which was about half of the population of the country. I would go around and talk to all kinds of civic organizations, Chambers of Commerce, trade organization, clubs, everything. I would really harp on the subject of two-way trade and tell them, “Look fellows, sure we have restrictions on cheddar cheese, we make a lot of cheddar cheese and politically you know how it is, we are protecting our cheddar cheese, so why don't you guys send us more blue-vein cheese and more soft-ripened cheese and stuff like that, which is exempt from our quantitative controls, the quotas and so on. Why don't you send us cheese that wholesales or export at more than a dollar a pound rather than stuff at under a dollar a pound, because that's where you will find your big market in the United States at.”

They would say, “Well, we're not really used to manufacturing that, we want to keep on manufacturing what we've been manufacturing all along and have you guys lower your trade barriers.” So I would say, “I'd love to see us and you, and especially the Europeans lower our trade barriers.” The Europeans and the Japanese were the main resistance to lowering trade barriers, but I said, “I'd love to see all trade barriers lowered, but until it happens, you guys had better learn to do the blue-vein and the brie and so on if you really want to get into our market.” Sometimes I would get complaints from the Agricultural Attache in Wellington, “What do you mean recommending to these people that they send us more cheese, they export more cheese?” I said, “Well, it's the expensive cheese that's more in competition with Danish and French than with domestically manufactured U.S. cheese.” “Well, you shouldn't be going around telling them to export to us, you should be telling them to import from us.” What can you say to such ignorance? Anyway, I did put on several very good trade shows there or American pavilions at the national trade shows. I really felt that I accomplished that part of my mission, because the statistics were going in the right direction, even though in these things there are always lags. I was only there for three and one-half years, so I didn't see the long-term results.

Q: I'm trying to think of some of those products at the trade shows?

WILLIAMS: One of them for example that met with some success, although not immediately or greatly was these things in the supermarket that read the bar code. They didn't have any of those down there, so we brought some of them in and a lot of New Zealanders gathered around saying, “How does this thing work?” Then we had some more common things like jeeps for example — four-wheel drive vehicles for getting around those rough New Zealand roads out in the woop- woops and the back-blocks. We sold copying machines and small printing presses. In a small country like that you don't need monsters like you would in Great Britain or somewhere. There were a lot of products. Oh, and pharmaceuticals too. Some of the best selling items were our pharmaceuticals. I think it all went pretty well.

Q: Did you have a lot of trouble talking North American businessmeinto that idea?

WILLIAMS: No. Once I outlined my plan, they were all enthusiastic and got right behind it and convinced their head offices or their Australian offices. Some of these reported back to the United States and others reported to their Australian subsidiaries. When I said that the Department of Commerce didn't give me any support, I meant they didn't give me budgetary support; but the Department of Commerce representative in Sydney did come over and help out, so I can't say that there was no support whatever. But, it was just that they did not want to — they had a limited budget and they didn't feel that there was enough potential there to warrant their spending budget money on us. I had a different view of it. I think my view turned out to be perhaps more correct. Oh, another thing we were trying to do was promote more travel to the United States. We would tell them, “All you blokes going every year to England, why don't you stop off in the United States on the way.”

Q: How did they think of that?

WILLIAMS: Oh, very well. I would get the Pan American representative activated. I would have a little lunch with several members of the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations, and we would talk up how advantageous and cheap it was to go to Europe and stop off in the United States, rather than going around the other way. The traditional air route from New Zealand to Great Britain was via Sydney, Perth and Singapore, or India or Pakistan and then maybe the Arab countries or Aden, before Aden was taken over by the Communists, and then on to England. We said, “What you need to do is go from here to Fiji to Honolulu, to LAX, spend a few days there or San Francisco, spend a few days, then spend a few more days in New York, and then on to London.

Q: So, the Pan American people went along with that?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. They were very happy. You see, until I arrived with the mandate to make it into a commercial post, Auckland had been what we call a retirement post. It was the reward to some aging Consular Officer for thirty or thirty-five years of long and faithful service to the United States, and who had had some hardship posts. They would reward him by sending him to Auckland and letting him vegetate there for a couple of years before retirement. I'm afraid I spoiled it.

Q: You probably ruined the whole system.

WILLIAMS: Ruined the whole system there, yes.

Q: So, you had your marching orders. What about transportation? What was going on out in the countryside? What other ceremonies were you involved in?

WILLIAMS: I would get invited to do things like awarding the big silver cup to the guy that won the New Zealand Grand Prix Automobile Race. I would be invited there to award the prize to the jockey that won the big horse race. I was invited to crown Miss New Zealand in the Miss Universe contest. That was very nice. In fact, my dinner partner for one particular evening on this beauty contest thing was Miss Universe herself. The outgoing Miss Universe, who at the time was Miss Israel, a beautiful girl. As a matter of fact —

Q: That doesn't sound like a hardship post assignment.

WILLIAMS: I've got a book here I want to show you. They asked former Fulbrighters to contribute to this book and I contributed. I wrote them some of my thoughts about my time as a Fulbrighter and how it helped my career, and I even sent them some pictures. And, lo and behold, it turned out that a couple of pictures of me were published. This is one when I was a Fulbrighter and that's one when I was Consul General.

Q: This is on page 53, the last living Moa. Oh my goodness. Hunting trip in New Zealand. Here you are in the picture a dog, 1952. Then, Consul General escorting Miss Universe in 1977. She is very lovely.

WILLIAMS: I told you.

Q: Oh, that's a serious rifle there in that picture. I don't knowhich picture is more significant actually. Do you want to talk?

WILLIAMS: Well, the chapter starts off with a quote from me.

Q: The situation between U.S. and New Zealand is asymmetrical. Very few Americans have an opinion about the Kiwis in New Zealand. It's better actually if you read it.

WILLIAMS: Would you like me to read it?

Q: Yes and tell us about it.

WILLIAMS: Well, I wrote this to them. They'd asked me what I thought about New Zealand after looking back on my experiences as Fulbright and as Consulate General. I said, and this is part of what I wrote to them. “The situation between the U.S. and New Zealand is asymmetrical. Very few Americans have much of an opinion about the Kiwis in New Zealand before going there. The country's natural beauty and the people's friendliness create a favorable impression. Most New Zealand academic types coming to the United States already have pre-formed strong and often unfavorable opinions about the U.S. which are changed very little by our personal friendliness.” I still think that's true. Of course, this was an academic program, so my comments were focused on academics. I wasn't really trying to put New Zealanders down, because I think they are just wonderful people. But the academic world there, as in most other places has, as I said, strong and often unfavorable opinions about the United States.

Q: This is “Fulbright in New Zealand,” by Joan Druett, published by the New Zealand-United States Educational Foundation. Neat book. This is lovely countryside.

WILLIAMS: Oh, it's all beautiful countryside down there. It's just marvelous. This hunting trip photo was taken up a river valley miles from the nearest human. I was there with one of my University mates as they call them. All your friends down there are “mates,” pronounced “mites.” He had made arrangements with a farmer that owned this land or owned some nearby land. I think he had hunting rights on the land that we were on. This shack in the picture was a sheep-shearer's shack. It was uninhabited except during sheep-shearing time. So, hunters could go along in the Fall, which was not sheep shearing time, and use it. Just sleep there, if there was no other hunter there, or even if there was, if there was room he'd just say, “Mind if we share, mate?” We had gone in by wading across the river. But while we were there, there was rain and the river flooded, so we weren't able to get out that way. So the farmer sent his daughter with some horses along our side of the river, about fifteen miles, to pick us up.

Q: That's a great picture. What kind of rifle are you carrying?

WILLIAMS: It's an Enfield.303, British Army rifle.

Q: And the dog?

WILLIAMS: The dog was my mate's dog. It was a nice dog. My mate and I didn't usually go out together on the actual days that we were going out hunting. This was in the deer hunting season, the “roaring season,” they called it. Some days I would take the dog and some days he would take the dog. We were up there for about a week.

Q: Well, that's great. This is lovely. Chapter 4 and MisUniverse. Isn't this something. Wow! In 1977.

WILLIAMS: You see there, my job was different from what it was at other posts. I described to you my job in Buenos Aires as being entirely trade promotion. Here, trade promotion was a very big part of the job. In fact, like I said, I was there to really promote that part of the Consulate General's operations; but, I had the responsibilities for all aspects of U.S. relations in that part of the country. Of course, the Ambassador in Wellington was my boss. As far as policy, I would always make sure that I was operating on the same wave-length as he. I would get invited to Wellington fairly frequently. I remember one time when Vice President Rockefeller visited, Nelson Rockefeller. The Ambassador had a dinner for him and invited my wife and myself to go down. My wife was a very attractive woman and Nelson Rockefeller spoke reasonably good Spanish. When he found out that she was practically a native Spanish speaker, he got her off in a corner and they were talking Spanish. Loreta said he was really kind of coming on to her.

Q: Oh my goodness. She knew what was happening?

WILLIAMS: Oh, she knew what was happening alright.

Q: She could psych him out, probably more than he could psych heout.

WILLIAMS: She said he was pretty good at it. Anyway, we did get invited to Wellington fairly frequently to coordinate with the Ambassador on policy. Also, like I said, I had to go around and give an awful lot of speeches. I had four standard speeches that I would give. One of them was connected directly with the Bicentennial; and one of them was trade, two-way trade, and I forget what the other two were. But, anyway which ever one was appropriate I would take it and add a few things to it, depending on my audience and then give that speech. I really got experience as a public speaker.

Q: Oh my goodness. So, every week, every day or what?

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this. It was at least once a week, sometimes twice. I spoke to every Rotary Club, every Lions Club in all the cities and towns. There were

twenty Rotary Clubs in the greater Auckland area alone, and I spoke to all of them. Some more than once. Then of course, the Lions and the Kiwanis and I don't know what all. I would sometimes speak to big groups, patriotic groups like the Victoria League. I remember one time the Governor General and I were the two featured speakers at this big formal, black-tie dinner with four hundred people there. The Governor General of course, is the Queen's personal representative, the Viceroy so to speak. Anyway, the guest of honor was to speak last, so I spoke first. I got up and made my speech; this was in the Bicentennial year. I got up and said, “During my research for this speech, I came across the curious fact that, in the United States, there is an organization dedicated to petitioning Her Majesty to forgive us for 1776 and all that and to take us back.” They just broke up. They were laughing for five minutes on that. The Governor General turned to me and said, “Ed, are you serious, is that true, is that really true?” I said, “Yes sir, it really is.”

Q: I was going to ask you how you handled the Bicentennial in NeZealand.

WILLIAMS: Well, we had a lot of visitors. USIA was very, very active during that year. They got a lot of American cultural icons and celebrities of all kinds to travel to different countries. We got a lot of them through there, even though it was kind of a detour for a lot of them. But, we had such people as Aaron Copeland came, Jim Michener came. Oh, I really have to tell you this about Jim Michener. Since I knew he was coming I was going to entertain him and have a fairly large reception and then a smaller dinner at the residence there. I was trying desperately to finish his then latest book, which was called “Centennial,” before he came so I could talk to him about it. I almost finished it, enough to talk to him about it. I had heard somewhere that he had had a close relationship with a Samoan lady named Aggie Grey. Now Aggie Grey, during World War II, was extremely well known to the U.S. forces in Samoa. Actually, she lived in Apia, which is Western Samoa rather than American Samoa, but she did have some economic interests in American Samoa, in Pago Pago. One of the things that got me interested in New Zealand in the first place back in early 1951 when I applied for the Fulbright, was having read Michener's books, “Tales of the South Pacific” and “Return to Paradise.” In “Return to Paradise,” there was

a chapter on Samoa in which Aggie Grey figured very prominently. I think that's where I remembered it from, but I had heard also from other sources about Aggie Grey, who I had heard, spent several months of every year in Auckland. Her health was deteriorating. She would come down there during certain seasons of the year. I just knew that they had known each other, but I didn't know what their relationship had been. Aggie Grey, as I say, was very well known. She owned, among other things, a hotel in Apia and lighterage company, because apparently, a lot of ships can't get up to a dock in Apia. They have to anchor out in the stream and the cargo is then transported to the docks in small vessels, lighters. She owned the lighterage company. She is reputed to have owned some houses of ill repute. Anyway, she was quite popular with all the American forces in the Pacific during the war. Anyway, when I had a definite date arranged for Michener to come to dinner, I called up the Samoan Consul General and found out that she was indeed there in Auckland at that time. So I invited her to come to dinner. I thought I'd spring this as a surprise on Jim. Anyway, we had the reception and I'd invited her a little later than the others. I was keeping an eye out for her, and I saw a car pull up with a grey-haired lady in it. I went to the door and welcomed her and then I called Jim. I said, “Jim, come here. I've got somebody I'd like for you to meet.” He saw her and they just stood there looking at each other for a minute. I did not know this, but they hadn't seen each other for twenty years. They just looked at each other and then they hugged and kissed. It was just a really touching thing. He said, “Ed, I'm just so pleased that you thought to do this and it was so very thoughtful of you.” Then, Jim motioned for his wife to come over and he introduced her to Aggie. It was a very touching reunion between him and Aggie Grey. I'm still not sure what their relationship had been previously during World War II or immediately thereafter, but certainly it really made me feel good. I was so glad that I thought of that and got them together. In fact, one thing that I did, Samoa had issued a stamp in her honor and I had some of those stamps, because at that time I was getting all the new issues from all the Pacific Islands, so I went and got my block of Aggie Grey stamps and got her to sign them for me. Anyway, that was part of our celebration of the Bicentennial Year. We had a lot of other well-known figures, such as Margaret Mead.

Q: What was she like?

WILLIAMS: She was a very interesting lady. We talked some about Samoa, because her first books were written about coming of age in Samoa. The Ambassador and his wife were there for that one. He came up to Auckland and we invited them to dinner with Margaret Mead.

Q: About what age was she then and how did she look?

WILLIAMS: She was a matronly lady of, I would say, sixty something. Not an old woman, certainly. That wasn't the impression she gave. She seemed a very vital woman. I can't really remember much of what we talked about, except some of her writings. I was more interested in the Samoa material than a lot of the other stuff that she had done. I remember asking her whether she thought things were changing and whether things were still the same in Samoa. She said, “No, because nowadays, so many of the Samoans come to New Zealand and are affected not all that favorably by their contact with New Zealand society and with the Maoris. New Zealanders tend to lump them in with the Maoris and generally have a — well, they think less of them. Come to think of it, I may have remarked to her on the fact that I dated a Samoan girl a few times when I was at Victoria University in Wellington in 1952-53. She told me a lot about life as a young adolescent girl in Samoa and she was just university-age then. Also, there was a young man there who was going to be the next “talking chief” of his tribe. They have an executive chief and then a talking chief in Samoa. The talking chief is apparently their chief negotiator. It's a separate job, but it has the same kind of rank or distinction as the executive chief. That's not what they call him, but I forget what the name is. I found my contact with the Samoan community in Wellington quite interesting. I didn't have too much contact. Mostly, the only contacts I had when I was at the University were fellow students. Later, my really only close contact was with their Consul General in Auckland, and some of his friends.

Q: What is the physical distance from New Zealand to Samoa??

WILLIAMS: Oh, two thousand miles, something like that. It's a long distance, and you have to think about those early Polynesian navigators and how they managed to make it. Of course, if you're heading in that direction its hard to miss New Zealand, but remember Captain Bligh missed an awful lot of islands. He sailed four thousand miles in an open boat and finally ended up in Bali, I believe or Timor, — one of those islands — having missed all of the islands in between.

Q: I watched a recent program, but don't know of this history. Wow.

WILLIAMS: It was tough.

Q: You were saying that the effect on the Samoans when they came tNew Zealand was - -

WILLIAMS: Was not very favorable.

Q: So, it really sort of drove them back?

WILLIAMS: Well, they acquired the habit of thinking of themselves aa sort of dependent class of people.

Q: And not take pride in their past, but the opposite?

WILLIAMS: No, not pride. They were looked down upon. The same way with the Tongans, and the Fijians and others. Of course, the Fijians aren't Polynesians, but this applies to the other Polynesians. Really, Auckland is the biggest Polynesian city in the world. As a Polynesian city, it's bigger than Honolulu. Honolulu is only second biggest. The total Polynesian population of Auckland includes Maoris, Tongans, Samoans, Cook Islanders, Niueans, and so on.

Q: So, when you were there, the first time you were there and then later, what did people look like? What's the feeling you have about the physical appearances of these people?

WILLIAMS: Well, pure-blooded Maoris are very distinctive-looking. I mean, you can not only tell a Maori from a European, of course, but you can also tell them from most other Islanders. I don't know how. I really couldn't describe how people, myself included can do that, but it's just like about ninety percent of the time, I can tell a Japanese from a Chinese or a Japanese from a Korean. I don't know, but it's just that there are certain characteristics and I really don't think I could explain what they are, how you can distinguish, but from just having seen a lot of them, you can really tell. But Maoris nowadays, and we're talking twenty years later now from the time I was there last. Maoris are beginning to have a lot more political influence. The Pakehas, which is the Maori word for “Europeans,” was adopted by the Europeans themselves, the people of European descent. So the Pakehas have decided that they really ought to give the Maoris more voice in everything, and now they are getting it. I don't know where this is going to lead. Probably it will lead to much more political influence by the fairly small minority of Maoris in New Zealand. If the Maori Queen were to be replaced by someone of a more political nature, then she is (Dame Te Ata, is not a very much of a political person, I don't think) it might lead to really interesting conflicts and I would hate to see that happen. But, speaking of Dame Te Ata, she is the Maori Queen and a Dame of the British Empire. She has been formally invested with that order, Dame of the British Empire. Dame Te Ata I-Rangi Kahua, I believe is her entire title. I think that's it, but we just always referred to her as Dame Te Ata. I called on her shortly after my arrival there.

Q: What was that like?

WILLIAMS: She was a very pleasant lady. I called on her at her Pa, a village or compound, shall we say, down at Ngaruawahia, which is south of Auckland, sixty miles or so.

Q: How did you get there?

WILLIAMS: Drove down.

Q: Driving what? Do you remember what kind of vehicle?

WILLIAMS: My official car was an Australian Chrysler and my personal car was also a Chrysler, but an American Chrysler Cordoba. Since this was an official visit, I drove my official car with the little flags up. The American flag on the right and my own Consular flag on the left. I felt like I had to be formal to drive into the Queen's compound, even though I didn't have a chauffeur.

Q: I was going to ask you about that.

WILLIAMS: I did not have a chauffeur there. I only had budget money for two servants; one of them was my gardener and the other one was my house servant. I didn't have enough use for a chauffeur to warrant spending the money. I could have had a chauffeur instead of a gardener, but I felt a gardener was more important.

Q: Good choice. I applaud that choice.

WILLIAMS: Sometimes when there was an American naval ship in port and I had to be ceremonial and be piped on board the ship and so on, I would get my commercial assistant to chauffeur me. I would say, “Quentin, I hope you don't mind being my chauffeur for the day. I'll take you out and buy you a beer afterwards.”

Q: No serious objection on his part?

WILLIAMS: No, no serious objection. So, I headed down to Ngaruawahia and was ushered in to the Presence. Of course, things are much more informal there. You don't bow like you would to Britannic, Her Majesty as I did when I was in London at the Queen's garden party. Anyway, we had a quite long and pleasant conversation about the Maoris in New Zealand, how they came there, her ancestry. I was curious about her direct ancestors. She showed me — you see that jade artifact up on the wall there?

Q: Oh yes, that is beautiful.

WILLIAMS: Well, that is called a “mere,” it is a weapon. There's a lot of jade to be found in New Zealand. She had seven of those weapons. Mine, by the way, is not an antique. I had it carved down there by a jade carver. He put a little thing on it so that it could be recognized, not as an antique, so that no future owner would be able to sell it as an antique. Otherwise, it looks just like an antique in all respects. You have to actually feel it to detect the difference. Anyway she had seven of those and they all had names and they all had a certain amount of mana, depending on who had owned them, how old they were and how many people they had killed. I thought that was very interesting, because mine doesn't have much mana, you know. Well, maybe it has a little mana because I own it, but I've never had occasion to kill anyone with it.

Q: You'll have to educate me a little bit here. That was ainstrument of death?

WILLIAMS: Yes, since they had no metal until the Europeans came, of course. You use it to hit somebody up side the head, on the temple, and it will break the skull and drive it into the brain, and that's it. The ordinary warriors would carry wooden ones made like those others up there on the wall, or ones made of stones other than jade. Anyway, that was one of the things that sort of stuck in my memory. I should tell you that I didn't see her very often, but the next time after that that I saw her, there was a young New Zealand woman who had written a book about the royal dynasty in Hawaii. About Princess Kaiulani, the last of the Hawaiian royal house. She was, I think, a granddaughter of Kamehameha V, or maybe a daughter or granddaughter of Queen Liliuokalani. Maybe I can find the book later and show you. Anyway, they were having the usual publishers party to launch the book and the author was there to talk about her research and how she came to write, and of course, the book, to sign copies of it. I knew that Dame Te Ata, the Maori Queen had been invited, but of course, that was just natural. I was invited to a whole lot of functions. Anyway, I showed up and was sipping away on the wine and nibbling on the cheese when somebody came up to me and said, “Mr. Williams, you will be speaking immediately

after the author of the book." I said, "Speaking?" The lady said, "Weren't you told?" I said, "No, I wasn't told. What am I supposed to speak about?" She said, "Well, we thought that you had been asked to make some remarks about Hawaii since Hawaii is a part of the United States and you're the representative of the United States." So, I immediately took my little glass of wine, took a gulp of it and got another one, and retired to a corner where I pulled out my trusty little notebook and started writing down some things, trying desperately to think some things to say. I actually ended up with some fairly acceptable remarks about the Polynesian kinship between the Maoris of New Zealand and their cousins, the Hawaiians, who speak virtually the same language, understandable to each other. I spoke of how some came south from the Cook Islands to New Zealand and others headed north to Hawaii. I emphasized what great navigators they were and how we were deeply honored to have a New Zealander who had some Maori blood writing about their cousins in Hawaii, and what an honor it was to have the Maori Queen here, bowing in her direction, and so on. Anyway, it seemed to go over rather well. But, gee whiz, to be told on fifteen minutes notice that one is going to have to speak of a gathering of a hundred people — you understand how I felt.

Q: That's not a lot of time, not a lot of warning at all.

WILLIAMS: No. But anyway, that was just one of the hazards of the job, and let me put it like this, it was not like the real hazards that are suffered by people in other jobs around the world. I'll take that one any time.

Q: I see. But you'd have to be on your toes. How does one dthat? Did you feel in the public eye all of the time?

WILLIAMS: Yes, I was. I'd walk down the street and I'd be greeted often, and I would greet others. There was a restaurant where my wife and I would go occasionally; sometimes we'd invite others, but every time we would go there, the maitre d' would take away the

silver that was on the table and substitute sterling, and substitute good porcelain for what was there. You know, that kind of thing.

Q: I see. Alright. Then that would be different.

WILLIAMS: It was different, yeah. Oh, I forgot to tell you one significant thing: I was a member of Auckland Central Rotary. That was the big Rotary Club there, several hundred members. I told you there were twenty other Rotary clubs in the greater Auckland area, but Auckland Central was the big and distinguished Rotary Club and all of the Chief Executive Officers of major corporations were members, as were others such as the Anglican Bishop, the editors of the newspapers and so on. This club went a step beyond the general openness, friendliness and informality there. Once you were a member of Auckland Central Rotary, you were automatically on a first name basis with everybody in the club. You could call up somebody and you would not get his secretary, you would get him on the line. There was just immediate entree. They would always invite me to speak to the club on the Fourth of July or the meeting closest to the Fourth of July and I thought that was a very nice touch.

Q: My goodness. Do you remember about how many members in thawhole membership there?

WILLIAMS: Four hundred, approximately, in that particular club. Except on really big days, we would have at least two hundred and fifty there, because they are very strict on people not skipping meetings. If you skip meetings you get penalized by having to donate something to their favorite charity.

Q: I see. Oh my. So this was usually a noon meeting?

WILLIAMS: A noon luncheon meeting.

Q: This is skipping, but thinking about visits from England, thKing and Queen, what other royalty came to visit?

WILLIAMS: Well, the Queen of the Netherlands came and visited whilI was there.

Q: What was that like?

WILLIAMS: Well, needless to say, that was a very ceremonial occasion. I really don't remember very much about her. She was not a memorable lady, I guess you could say.

Q: What was the occasion?

WILLIAMS: You know, I don't even remember what the occasion was. I should, but I don't. She was going to be received by the Prime Minister in Wellington, but in Auckland she was received by the Mayor, Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson who was an elderly Jewish gentleman who had been a manufacturer before he retired and decided to run for Mayor of Auckland.

Q: And he was Jewish? How did that happen?

WILLIAMS: Well, I tell you. I had a Jewish friend there who was also a Knight of the Realm who was the owner of one of the largest chains of department stores in New Zealand. I can't remember his name. But, he told me that in 1841, his great, great, great grandfather had established a store in a little tent on the beach at Russell in the Bay of Islands, which was the first European settlement in New Zealand. The town was established in 1840, anhis great, great, great grandfather was there establishing this little store in a tent in 1841, and they expanded from there.

Q: Where had he come from?

WILLIAMS: From England.

Q: So, this Sir Dove-Meyer was from there?

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure where Sir Dove-Meyer's ancestors came from directly. I think they're probably English too, but I'm really not sure about that, but they had been there for two or three generations at least.

Q: So, he became the Mayor?

WILLIAMS: He was the Lord Mayor of Auckland. Auckland is like London. In London, there is the City of London in the middle and then there are all these other cities, Westminster, Kensington, Chelsea and all the others which are really a part of Greater London. Nobody thinks of Kensington as being a separate city. Well, Auckland's the same way. There are a lot of little cities around, each of which has its little Mayor, but Sir Dove-Meyer was the Lord Mayor of Auckland. He was quite a character. The first time I called on him, one of the first things he did after we shook hands and got acquainted he said, “So we have another Williams as Consul in Auckland?” What he was referring to was the fact that there was a John B. Williams who was Consul there in the 1840's, and then, a bit later, a John C. Williams. I said, “Well yes, but it probably won't happen again for another hundred years.” He had just had a hip replacement operation, and he jumped up on a chair to show me how successful it had been.

Q: To show off his ability there?

WILLIAMS: To show off his new (inaudible) He was a real character. We got to be good friends. Let's see, what were we?

Q: The Queen of the Netherlands did come?

WILLIAMS: Oh yeah, she came and he welcomed her and had a party foher and so on.

Q: Other visiting dignitaries?

WILLIAMS: My first major visitor was Casper Weinberger. He was then Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare. There were others, but I can't remember all of them. Let's see, we had an Admiral of the Fleet come to visit. We had Congressmen coming down frequently. I wish I could think of some more.

Q: Why did they come?

WILLIAMS: Some of them would come to check on things like the ANZUS Treaty, general relations with New Zealand and Australia, or just general congressional boon doggles.

Q: Did you feel that most North Americans had much appreciation foNew Zealanders?

WILLIAMS: Bloody little. Many Americans think that New Zealand is part of Australia. I remember back in 1952 when I was going to New Zealand there was even more misconception. I remember somebody asked me, “Why are you going up there?” I said, “What do you mean 'up there'?” He said, “Well, isn't that up there off the coast of Canada?” I said, “That's Newfoundland.” Anyway, Americans are pretty geographically ignorant. Later on, when we talk about Canada, it's the same. Americans know so little about Canada. But the New Zealanders know a lot more about the United States than we know about New Zealand.

Q: Is that right?

WILLIAMS: Oh, very much more.

Q: What about New Zealand and England?

WILLIAMS: Oh. They are very intimately acquainted.

Q: Is there dissension?

WILLIAMS: Yes, there was some dissension, because when New Zealand went into the European Common Market, they were forced to cut out the tariff preferences they had been giving to New Zealand meat and agricultural and dairy products, especially the dairy products. The New Zealanders' attitude was like: “Here we are, little teenagers being thrown out of the house. We're being cast adrift. We're up the proverbial creek without the proverbial means of locomotion.” In a way it was true. But the New Zealanders have been the most loyal of the old Commonwealth countries and there's no talk of breaking with Britain. There may be some talk now, I don't know. But in Australia there's always some talk about declaring independence from the Commonwealth and becoming a republic. There was none of that talk in New Zealand; at least there wasn't when I was there and I haven't heard of any since. They seem reasonably happy with the situation. As you know, Americans in general know very little about the way the British Commonwealth runs. The constitutional questions and so on, such as the fact that the final appeal in any court case in New Zealand or other Commonwealth countries is to the House of Lords in London. So, you can appeal from the Supreme Court in New Zealand to the British House of Lords. Very few appeals are taken that far, but it is possible. The Governor General, the Head of State, is appointed by Her Majesty the Queen and has the power to dissolve Parliament just like Her Majesty does in London. This power is usually not exercised, except with the advice and consent of the Prime Minister, although it did happen once. Not in New Zealand, but in Australia. It happened that the Governor General dissolved Parliament without the consent of the Prime Minister and let me tell you, it really hit the fan.

Q: What was that year?

WILLIAMS: I think it was '76 that this happened.

Q: While you were around?

WILLIAMS: Yes, across the Tusman.

Q: I want to ask you more about Auckland, about New Zealand and have you comment some more about your time there, specifically perhaps Dr. Teller's visit there. Shall we start there?

WILLIAMS: As I mentioned before, during the Bicentennial year, 1976, the U.S. Information Agency arranged for a lot of very distinguished Americans to visit there. Not just there, but all over the world. We were talking earlier about the New Zealand's nuclear policy or consideration of a nuclear policy I should say. Among other things, you may recall that I mentioned that the University of Auckland was forbidden to set up a program to do research using radioactive isotopes for medical purposes, because radioactive isotopes were nuclear, and everything nuclear was bad, according to the extreme left-wing whom the government was trying to placate. Anyway, one of our distinguished visitors during that year was Dr. Edward Teller who is known as the “Father of the hydrogen bomb.” It was kind of amusing — because I had a reception for him at my home and somebody said, “Oh, you're really the father of the hydrogen bomb.” He said in his inimitable Hungarian accent, “I don't want my son to be brother to any bomb.” That's not a very good imitation of his accent I'm afraid. But anyway, the news of his visit had sparked great controversy among the lefties. Anyone who had anything to do with developing the American bomb of course, was bad. Because, at the time, all the lefties were protesting American nuclear tests, but not Chinese nor Soviet. Nothing was said about those, just the American and the French. So anyone who had anything to do with American nuclear development was automatically evil. Unfortunately, this was exactly the kind of thing that was reflected to a great degree in the New Zealand press, which was very heavily influenced by the left. So, when I had this reception for Teller, I invited — well, I didn't invite any of the real extremists, but I did invite some of the newspaper people whom I knew to be of the leftist persuasion, plus some academics, plus all kinds of people, because I didn't want to have anyone say, “Hey, you've got just nobody here, but people who sympathize with nuclear development plans.” Apparently, there was some little controversy at the time as to whether New Zealand should have nuclear power. Of course, the left being totally anti-

nuclear in anything except the Soviet and Chinese settings, was very much opposed to this. Dr. Teller was given a tour around Auckland and its outskirts and everyone thought he was there to promote with the government the idea of starting a nuclear power plant. Of course, that was just a sort of generalized assumption on the left, which included the press. At the reception at the official U.S. government residence, somebody said, “Dr. Teller, I suppose you know what damage a nuclear power station would do to this country's environment.” He says, “Well, I don't know why you say that, because I have not recommended to anyone the establishment of a nuclear power station here. In fact, I think it will be some years before you will even face any need for nuclear power.” Then, the guy just stood there with his mouth open. They all just stood there with their mouths open. He was a charming fellow, really.

Q: What did he look like? His size.

WILLIAMS: Well, even then, I considered him elderly. I don't know that I would now, but he was brilliant. He was sharp. He made a couple of speeches there and people would raise points and he would come back with pertinent comments, factual comments. His memory was very good. Somebody asked him about his relationship with Dr. Oppenheimer and he was full of praise for him personally, but he did mention something very — not really terribly critical, but he was just a little bit (inaudible) inclined you know. We really seen on PBS; no, it was on A and E, I guess, about Oppenheimer.

Q: I missed some of that.

WILLIAMS: You should have seen that. You should see it, really. Its very good. Oppenheimer, of course was never identified as a member of the Communist Party, but his wife was, and he had close relations with Communists both before and during World War II. Anyway, Dr. Teller didn't bring up any of that. He just said he was a fine man, a great physicist, a wonderful organizer. And again, people were standing there with their

mouths open, because they expected Teller to really come down hard on Oppenheimer, because Oppenheimer had been rather critical of him.

Q: I see. So, he was very gracious about that?

WILLIAMS: Very, very gracious. Going back to New Zealand's sources of power, he said, “Look, you've got a lot of potential for more hydroelectric power here.” And he said that he had been doing some investigation into these wave machines. They call them ducks I believe, where you get a series of machines out there in the water floating and the waves cause them to move up-and-down, see-saw fashion, and the up-and-down motion generates electric power. Then, he talked about wind power. He said, “What you need is steady winds of twenty-five miles per hour or more and you've got a lot of places here where that's true, so you've just got lots of options for power before you need to get around even to thinking about nuclear power.” Well, again, like I say they were standing there open-mouthed, because all of their prepared remarks, which were of course denunciations, were no longer valid; so they didn't know what to say. Everybody seemed to get the idea, New Zealanders anyway, even the lefties. Kiwis are a pretty friendly bunch so I guess the idea was like, maybe we just better forget about this and start drinking.

Q: I see. I was going to ask if you were standing around or what.Tea time, dinner, after dinner?

WILLIAMS: Oh, we were standing around. It was a pre-dinner reception. One of these six-to-eight things after which we had a smaller group for dinner with Dr. Teller. It was very, very interesting. He was one of the more interesting people we had there during the Bicentennial year, although other people like Jim Michener and Aaron Copeland. Really interesting people. It was great!

Q: Well, we are thinking about your whole tour in Auckland, anpositive or negative factors. How would you assess that period?

WILLIAMS: Well, I was the first officer to be assigned as Consul General there after they elevated the post to a Consulate General. I was given the task of changing it from a principally Consular post to a commercial post, and I feel I accomplished that. During my three and one-half years there we mounted full-fledged trade shows, American pavilions in larger trade shows, catalog shows, and all sorts of ways of introducing American products to people in New Zealand. I think I did the job that they sent me there to do. I thought I'd made it very difficult for them to ever again send anyone there as principal officer, as Consul General, who was not a trade-economic type, and allow it to lapse back into being what it had been before, sort of a sleepy retirement post for people with long service who were being given a reward by being posted at a nice place from which to retire.

Q: And who wanted to speak English, with no big problems with thlanguage.

WILLIAMS: Yeah, right. But, unfortunately, I have just recently heard about a big wave of budget problems which might cause them to close down the post. I think this would be very unfortunate, because Auckland, as I think I told you before, is by far the largest city in New Zealand. Much larger than Wellington, the capital. And it is the capital for every purpose other than political. It is the economic, business, media, cultural, educational, every other kind of capital of New Zealand, except political. Not to have a post there I think would be really bad. I'm sure the budget people would say, “Oh well, it's only an hour's flight from Wellington and people can visit.” Well, people don't really want to go there as often as would be necessary to really do the equivalent of what I and my successors were doing there. So, I was very, very sorry to see that the budget was in such bad shape that they were about to close it down.

Q: Either the budget or the legislators were in bad shape. One of the two. Leaving Auckland and going on to your next post in Ottawa. So, what were the circumstances of your going to Ottawa, certainly the coldest post. Was it a major shock as far as the climate went?

WILLIAMS: Not really. Although, I was told when I got there that there would be snow on the ground from Thanksgiving to Easter and indeed there was. But I knew it was going to be tough. I'm really not a winter sports person. I used to do a little skiing from time to time, but I did not get involved in all that stuff. I did go skating along the Rideau Canal there, because they get these Zambonis out on the Canal for about a stretch of about ten miles in the winter and they keep the ice on that Canal smooth. When it goes through Ottawa, it runs parallel to the Rideau River. About the Canal, by the way, there is an interesting little historical point. It was built about 1825 to 1827. In two wars against us, the British had been very much constrained by not being able to get ships all the way up the Saint Lawrence River without passing through stretches of the river on which one border was the United States, the state of New York. So, they built this Canal so that ships get off the Saint Lawrence and go up the Ottawa River to what is now Ottawa, and then take this little dog leg towards the southwest. They couldn't use the Rideau River, because there is a waterfall there about fifty feet high where the Rideau River falls into the Ottawa River; so they had to build a Canal with locks coming down to the river there. This was done over a period of about two years. The Canal was dug parallel to the Rideau River down to Lake Ontario so that in case of another war — and there was danger of another war in 1842 I believe — they would be able to get their ships to the Great Lakes without passing by New York and the big gun batteries on the shore there around Malone and Ogdensburg and so on. Anyway, I thought that was quite interesting. A lot of people used to skate to work. I even saw people cross-country skiing to work in the winter. You would see a lot of people with little backpacks just skating merrily. People in the Department of Defense, which happened to be right on the Canal in downtown Ottawa. It was fun. I used to go out in the evening sometimes and skate. I hung up my skates when I left there. I don't think I've been on them but twice since then.

Q: I can remember trying to skate in New Jersey and I thought I was going to break my neck. It was the coldest I've ever been in the world. So, you saw a great deal of that?

WILLIAMS: Yes. We saw a great deal of ice. Anyway, its a great place to live. I don't know if I've mentioned this before, but the Canadians are very clever about finding ways to restrict trade without appearing to do so. They have learned, obviously a great deal from the pre-World War II Germans who were very good at that. After Hitler took power he had some very clever economic types doing that. The Brazilians are also very, very clever at that sort of thing. The Canadians, I think, are probably better in finding sneaky ways to restrict trade so they can say, “Ah, well this is not a trade restriction, this is consumer protection.” For example, the UPS trucks which they would not allow. They would not allow UPS to have those big trucks. They couldn't keep UPS from operating there under our trade agreements, but they could restrict how they could operate for a long time. They were forced to use taxis with a baggage rack on top, pulling a little trailer behind them. But, when we went to the Canadian government about it, they said, “Oh, those are regulations of the Province of Ontario, you see, and we, the Federal Government, don't have anything to do with that.”

Q: Did you know that this might be the case? Did you have ainkling of that before you headed to Ottawa?

WILLIAMS: I had no inkling. I really knew zilch about U.S.-Canadian relations, except of course, I was aware that we had the U.S.- Canadian automotive agreement, which was the predecessor of the NAFTA and which was working very, very well. That was signed back in the mid 60's. I didn't have much to do with it at that time, but it was back in the 60's at the time when I was Senior Economist in the General Commercial Policy Division of the State Department. Many Canadians thought that this was just going to be disastrous for them. I mean some Canadians did, but the government was convinced by some of their economists that it would be good for them, and indeed it was. It was good for them and good for us. It gave the automobile companies a lot more choice about where they were going to manufacture particular models of cars and parts and so on. It has been very good economically for both countries. This is one thing that you did not hear much about during

the big controversy over NAFTA when, unfortunately, a lot of people on my side of the political fence went the wrong way on that and opposed NAFTA. I was very sorry to see that. You know, I'm an economist and they aren't. Anyway, it was a very interesting time in U.S.-Canadian relations — we were having to overcome or trying to overcome a steady succession of little things, little trade restrictions. Each one of these in itself was not of great significance, but altogether they really ate into what the U.S. was able to export.

Q: Give us some years in there.

WILLIAMS: I was there from late '78 to mid '81. I think I told yothat I retired out of there.

Q: So, when you got there you became aware of this way of operating?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. It didn't take long.

Q: Tell me a little bit about the size of the post and other peoplthere.

WILLIAMS: The Embassy at Ottawa was a medium size Embassy. Nowhernear as big as the ones in London and Paris and Bonn, but pretty big.

Q: About how many, roughly?

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure. I think probably, including not only Foreign Service Officers belonging to the Department of State or the USIA, but including CIA, Defense Intelligence, the Military Attaches, the other agencies like the FBI who maintain liaison with their Canadian counterparts, I think we had about seventy-five or eighty officers and probably about that many clerical and communications personnel. That was at the Embassy. Now, at that time we had Consulates or Consulates General in seven or eight cities across Canada. I'm not sure. Some of them may have been closed in the meantime. Montreal, Quebec City, Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver and out East, in the Maritime Provinces, there was Halifax.

Q: Oh really?

WILLIAMS: I think there was also one at Saint John's, Newfoundland.I believe that was all.

Q: Did you travel?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes.

Q: Would people have gone to other posts?

WILLIAMS: Oh yes, of course. I was in charge of commercial matters. Therefore, I supervised the commercial work of all of the other posts that did commercial work, and this meant all of them, except Quebec. Quebec was exempt, because they didn't do commercial work. They were entirely political. I did visit the other posts just to make sure what was happening there. To see that reporting was being done to my satisfaction and that people there were trying to locate trade opportunities for American companies and so on. That was interesting. Then, of course, we had a lot of people coming up from the United States. It was an easy place to get to, not like Auckland or Buenos Aires, so we would get a lot of state trade representatives. For example, the North Carolina Department of Commerce. There was a guy that I got to be pretty good friends with who would come up there periodically. He was looking for ways to sell North Carolina furniture or North Carolina textiles or whatever up there. So, I would go around with him and introduce him to the right people. And the same thing would happen with other State representatives. We had Florida, and Texas, and Maryland; we had all kinds of state representatives coming up there. Also, people from individual companies who would say: “I'm from such and such a company and we're exporting this product and how do you advise we go about it?” So, I advised them. That's one of the reasons I was there.

Q: Two questions. About the size, the population of Ottawa?

WILLIAMS: Roughly, I think the greater Ottawa was maybe half a million people. The city itself, within the city limits was somewhat less, but that's true of any city. Washington, DC versus greater Washington.

Q: The second question, was it easier or harder to do your work, tbe there because the fact that Ottawa was the capital?

WILLIAMS: Easier, I think. Easier, because I got to know the people in the federal government. I shouldn't say “federal,” because its really a confederation, not a federation. I should say the central government, I suppose. Anyway, I got to know fairly soon who were the people I could talk with. Who were the people who could and would try to solve problems and who were the real obstructionists that I should try to avoid if possible. I think it helped. But, of course, the fact is that Toronto is the biggest business center. I had to go over there fairly frequently, but I did try to keep in contact with the major Trade Associations, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the Canadian Importers Association, and others. In fact, I was invited fairly frequently to give speeches at these. I remember one time there was the annual meeting of the Canadian Manufacturers Association and I was invited to go to Toronto and give the main address one day. I spoke up for more two-way trade. I mentioned, among other things, that they should send us more of that great Canadian beer, and import more of our wine. Anyway, when I finished I got a standing ovation. I thought this was great. People are supportive of increases in two-way trade.

Q: The beer sounds fine, but I was going to ask you about areas of greatest conflict in trade, or possibility of conflict? Were there surprises?

WILLIAMS: I think of course, one of the major things was in the area of wood products. This involves some subsidies. The international trading community had rules about subsidies under the old GATT and now the World Trade Organization, although I must confess I have not read the entire charter of the new WTO. But a country is entitled

to impose tariffs to compensate for a government's subsidies to its exports. Now, the Canadians would subsidize production and then claim that it was not a subsidy to exports, you see. And we decided it is really a subsidy, because if it were not for the subsidies, they would not be able to export at these low prices. We would get sometimes to the point of actually imposing compensatory duties on some of their products. The wood products were particularly a sore point with them, because they seemed to feel strongly that merely subsidizing producers did not constitute subsidies for exports, and we were insisting that they were.

Q: I see.

WILLIAMS: Well, without going into a lot of technical detail, which I probably wouldn't remember very clearly anyway, but I think that was the main kind of problem. I think that's probably the best illustration of the type of problem we had with Canada. We would impose countervailing duties on some of their products to compensate for either subsidies or for dumping. Dumping is another problem we had with them. There are two kinds of dumping. Two things that fall under the category of dumping in international trade rules. One of them is when products of a country are exported to another country at prices at “less than fair value.” Another is, when they are exported at less than the same product they are being sold for in that country. So, either way, the two tests for dumping, either where its less than what you would call “fair value,” because with most products, you know how much it costs to produce them if you're doing it fairly and you're not using slave labor or something. You can figure that out and then figure a reasonable profit. If we were dealing, as we do sometimes, with countries that do not or did not operate on the profit system or the private enterprise system, then they would say, “Well, profit is a very bad word, we do not have “profit” in our country.” Of course, this didn't happen with the Canadians, but you see what I mean. So, we would figure out what it should be sold for as fair value and then add transportation costs to get the product to the United States, and if it was being offered for sale for less than that figure, then it was less than “fair value.” Also, if it was being offered for sale at a lower price than the same product was being offered for

sale in the country of origin, then you would know something is funny. The Japanese do this a lot. But the Canadians did it too. So, we would have to go after them about that and they would come up with all kinds of very innovative and inventive reasons why this was happening. We would come up with all kinds of reasons why it shouldn't be happening. Eventually, we would have to say, “Well look, until this stops we're going to have to put a countervailing duty of X percent. Our backroom guys in the Department of Commerce or in the STR, the Special Trade Representative's office, have figured out this is how much we would have to put on to compensate.” They would say, “Oh, no, no, no, that is far too much.” Well, you see what I mean. We would have all these problems with them, and it was continual. We had another problem with them, which not in my bailiwick, but it was an interesting one. They wanted to get us out of our Embassy. You see, we were the first country to actually recognize Canada when it acquired independent status within the British Commonwealth. They have had Dominion status since 1867, but until the '20's they didn't get around to having Embassies in Canada and sending Ambassadors to other countries. So, I think it was in maybe 1930 or '31, under the Statute of Westminster that this began. Anyway, we were the first country to actually send an Ambassador to Canada, rather than just having Consulates there. We had Consulates all over Canada. We had Consulates in some of the most unbelievable little towns in Canada over the last one hundred and fifty years. Anyway, they were so grateful to us for doing this that they put at our disposal, (that is, they allowed us to buy) a great big building, great big by early thirties standards, right across the street from the Houses of Parliament. My office window looked right down on the main entrance to the main house of Parliament. When they had a big ceremony or something and people would come riding up in carriages, with the Governor General in his uniform, riding in his carriage into the gate, I would be standing there in my window watching. I was on the floor above the Ambassador. The second floor was the prestige floor. I was on the third floor. Anyway, they wanted to get us out of there. They had given us some land not too far away, still in the center of Ottawa, but they wanted us to move and we didn't particularly want to move.

Q: You couldn't watch the carriages in the other place.

WILLIAMS: Right. Well, we were going to build a new Embassy, you see and we thought it would be nice to have that in addition to the original. But they wanted us to leave that building so they could do something else with it. Anyway, that little controversy never did get settled while I was there, and I believe it still has not been settled. I forget exactly what it was that they would not give us permission to do at the new site that we wanted to be able to do. These things do get away from me. Anyway, thinking about the Canadians, there are some people who say you can always tell a Canadian, but you can't tell him much. The only way you can tell a real Canadian by talking to him, is if he says he is from Canada or if he says “shedufe” or “aluminum.” A lot of them, hate to be thought to be just like the Americans. (particularly the ones from Toronto). Now, the people out West they are good old boys and girls. They are really such nice people. Well, many of the people from Toronto are nice people too, but so many of them do have this anti-American attitude. Toronto is one of the world capitals, of anti-Americanism outside —

Q: Outside Montreal?

WILLIAMS: No, no. The French Canadians seem to like us. They come down to Florida and Georgia and South Carolina to the beaches there, and they really want our sympathy in their conflicts with the English Canadians, their language conflict and their independence conflict. They want our support and our sympathy. I think they really do. I think its not just a ploy, I think they really do like us, because a lot of them do come down and spend a lot of time down here. Its the English Canadians in Toronto who are the ones most bitterly opposed to a closer relationship with us and are always talking “cultural imperialism.” They restricted our magazines, newspapers, radio broadcasts and so on. There's not much they can do about radio and T.V. for people who live right close to the border, but they tried to do everything they could. Of course, if you've got your own antenna of some sort, it's tougher, but the Canadian Government did try to keep their people from receiving our broadcasts. I forget exactly how they did this, but I do remember

that there were some regulations to keep people from listening to or receiving certain channels, which to my mind is no better than Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia.

Q: Just jamming signals.

WILLIAMS: No jamming, no. Just enacting regulations prohibiting or restricting people from receiving certain channels. I think they weren't supposed to receive satellite transmissions or certain frequencies or something like that. I mean, how can you do that and be a democratic country? I just don't know. Anyway, that was just one of the problems we had with them. There were no restrictions at all on Canadian newspapers and magazines coming into the United States, but they had restrictions about U.S. magazines and newspapers going into Canada.

Q: And the radio transmission and T.V.?

WILLIAMS: Well, we were always having trouble with them. They were always wanting us to make our radio stations diminish their signal in the direction of Canada, and we had problems with this. Why should we do that? There is no good reason why the United States should go along with that kind of thing: restricting the people of a neighboring country from hearing or seeing what is actually going on down here. They were apparently thinking they wanted to establish some separate Canadian “cultural identity.” Oh yeah! Well, fellows that's going to be tough. I suppose in a sense you can sympathize with this, but I really don't see why. What good does it do to erect cultural barriers and walls there? I don't see that it does the Canadian people any good. All it does is do some good maybe for the politicians. But, some of the politicians there were — in fact, the M.P. from the District for downtown Ottawa where I lived was an American Vietnam draft dodger who went up there and got into polities and became a leftist M.P. Boy!

Q: And took Canadian citizenship?

WILLIAMS: Yeah.

Q: So, those were some of the problems. Let's see. We didn't talk about food or economic or other cultural ideas. How did you feel that your work was progressing? Were there major highs or lows if you think about your whole time there?

WILLIAMS: No. I'm afraid I can't point to any major highs or lows. It was all sort of a continuum. It was as if I had gone there and gotten on this continuous belt and sort of moved down it over a period of years and then got off again and all the while taking care of problems here and there, except of course, that I did mention that we did take the first steps towards the North American Free Trade Association. Actually, the first step as I think I did mention was already done and that was the U.S. Canadian Automotive Agreement. But then we took steps towards expanding that to include all kinds of trade. We did get that on the road. We would get a lot of delegations coming up from Washington to help out with that. So, it was not as if the entire load of that was on the Embassy. I'll tell you one good thing that I did. This was a high for me personally. I'm not sure if I mentioned the Society for American Wines.

Q: I don't think so. I'm pretty sure you did not.

WILLIAMS: Well, that's good. That's a nice little high.

Q: Tell me about that.

WILLIAMS: Well, I was sitting in my office one day and I got a telephone call from a lady whom I vaguely knew, because her husband was an Assistant Deputy Minister in one of the Ministries. I did not have too much to do with him, because it was not one of the economic ministries. Anyway, I did know them from parties. I knew them vaguely. Anyway, she said she would like to talk about increasing the availability of American wines in Canada and invited me to lunch. So I went and had lunch with her, and she suggested that we should form a Society for American Wines, because there was a Society for French Wines, (Les Chevaliers du Tastevin) a Society for Italian Wines and one for German

Wines. Anyway, I thought, that's a good idea. She said that she had several friends who were very interested personally, either in the restaurant business or the wine importing business or something who would be interested in helping to form such a Society. So, I said fine, this is great. At the moment she suggested all this time, it did not occur to me that wine was not in my job description. That was the Agricultural Attache's job. But, I guess I've never been the kind of person to say, “That's not in my job description.”

Q: Sounds like an economic problem to me. A challenge.

WILLIAMS: Yes. Imports or exports from the U.S. into Canada. I did bring the Agricultural Attache in early in the game. He was quite happy to have me take the lead. Anyway, we got it off the ground. We organized a committee, and I went to the Ambassador and got his approval to have a wine tasting at the Ambassadorial residence. We invited about two hundred people to taste American wines. This was not a formal wine tasting, it was just a very informal one, but we had a number of American wines there for them to taste. We invited everybody in town that we could find who had anything to do with making decisions about importing or serving wine on a major scale, like a restaurant or importers or the provincial liquor and wine stores. Both provinces, because Ottawa is right across the river from the city of Hull, which is in the Province of Quebec. So, we got the Quebec Provincial and the Ontario Provincial liquor store people in there too. It was a very nice little affair. We increased our membership. The Society for American Wines signed up about eighty members. We decided that if we were ever going to do anything really important that we were going to have to make a fairly big splash. So we decided to have a real big-time, world-class, formal wine tasting. We organized it and we did it. What we did was this: we got six of the great California vineyards to donate a case of wine each, and then we went out and bought six cases of French wines, equivalent wines — they were all Cabernet Sauvignon. As you know, I'm sure, there are only five of the French Bordeaux Grand Cru Cabernets. That is only five reds. The other one, Chateau d'Yquem is white. We had Chateau Lafite Rothschild, Chateau Mouton Rothschild, Chateau La Tour, Chateau Margaux and Chateau Haut-Brion. We're talking really big time here. Then, we selected

one Premier Cru, I forget which one it was now, (I think it was Chateau Ducru Beaucaillou) but it was one you would pay a couple of hundred dollars a case for, at least. Anyway, we had six versus six. A somewhat similar tasting had been done in 1976. It was called the Judgement of Paris since it was done in Paris, but it was not a direct head-to-head formal, double-blind tasting. The American wines had come out very well in that. But with this, we were going all the way. We invited ten judges. We tried to get the French Embassy to bring a judge over from France, but they didn't want to have a thing to do with it. They didn't want to touch it.

Q: Beneath them, or just didn't have the time?

WILLIAMS: I think they were scared. Anyway, we had at least one French palate, because we had the Dean of the School of Hospitality from the University of Quebec. I forget exactly what his title was, but he was a French Canadian who had been trained in oenology in France. We had ten judges who were professionals in the area of wine, people who were known to be experts, including wine writers. In fact, we invited the wine writer for the New York Times, who was too busy to come to a wine tasting in Ottawa, of all places. Anyway, we had the wine tasting. As I said, it was double-blind which means that the people who were tasting the wine didn't know what they were tasting, and the people who served the wine to the judges didn't know which wine they were serving, because it was poured in a back room and only members of the committee did the pouring and knew exactly which wines were served in what order. You put down the glasses on little numbered pieces of paper. Anyway, these judges tasted all of the wines, and just not to leave you in suspense, American wines won the top five places. Strangely enough, it was not one of the Grand Cru French wines, that got the top billing on the French side; it was the one Premier Cru which we had brought in to make up six. Well, let me tell you, this did cause us somewhat of a splash in the wine world.

Q: No puns intended?

WILLIAMS: Yeah, yeah. The New York Times wine writer, devoted his entire column to it the following week. I'm sure he was sorry he had not come. It did cause some kind of a splash. At first we got good press up there and our Society for American Wines expanded and we started getting results in terms of placement of American wines on shelves in the stores, that kind of thing. That's important you know. Also, getting the Canadian government to not discriminate. They had taxes which, in affect, discriminated against American wines, but they did not apply these same regulations or taxes to French and German and Italian wines. So, we started getting that taken care of, and we also started expanding and setting up chapters of the Society for American Wines in other cities. It was in '80 that we did this big tasting, and by the time I left in late '81, we had chapters in five more cities in Canada.

Q: All across or mostly eastern?

WILLIAMS: All across. We even had one in Edmonton and one in Calgary.

Q: On these winners for the American wines, were these California oNew York State?

WILLIAMS: California.

Q: Do you remember the ones?

WILLIAMS: Well, yes. We had a Robert Mondaui Proprietors Reserve; we had a Sterling; we had a Freemark Abbey; we had a Stag's Leap; I don't remember the others now, but they were very distinguished California wines. We had gone after these. We wanted to get the very best. We also wanted to get donations, because we couldn't afford to buy the American wines. We had to buy the French wines, of course, but we had to get the American ones donated, which they did. Needless to say, the American wine people were very, very happy about the whole thing.

Q: I bet they were delighted to ship the donations.

WILLIAMS: Oh yes, they were. I think they felt that they had made a very good investment. Anyway, I understand since then that exports of American wines to Canada have gone up tremendously. Even though, as I said, this was not, strictly speaking, my field, but the Agricultural Counselor was very cooperative and he was not at all resentful of the fact that I had taken it upon myself to get the ball rolling on this without consulting him first.

Q: He didn't consider it a turf problem?

WILLIAMS: No, no. He was about to retire.

Q: He was probably happy for you to do the work.

WILLIAMS: Maybe so, I'm not sure, but he was a nice guy really. Anyway, it did do some good for U.S.-Canadian trade and it was a very interesting thing for me personally. I felt it was somewhat of an accomplishment. When I tell this, I tell people that this lady was the father and I was the mother of the idea. She planted the seed and I took it and nurtured it.

Q: That's a great story. I'd like to have been there for the wintasting and.

WILLIAMS: I mentioned before that I had supervisory responsibilities, as the Counselor for Commercial Affairs in Canada, for the commercial activities of the Consulates and Consulates General all over Canada except Quebec, which you remember I said was strictly a political post. Incidently, I might just mention that, in that job, I was on loan from the Department of State to the Department of Commerce, which by then had been given primary responsibility for commercial activities abroad. Previously, when I had occupied a similar position at the Embassy at Buenos Aires, it was a Department of State responsibility. But, by now the primary responsibility had been passed over to the Foreign Commercial Service of the Department of Commerce. But being on loan to the Department of Commerce really didn't affect the substance of my work at all. I do recall, however, that our Ambassador when I first arrived there, was a career man, Tom Enders, who did not think much of commercial work. He was one of these people who had

been in political work most of his career and thought that the real essence of the Foreign Service was political work and that all of this business about economic and commercial work was almost irrelevant. In fact, prior to my arrival, he had wanted to downgrade that position from Counselor to Attache. I let them know that if they did that I would not accept the position, because I would consider it very much a personal down-grading. So, they dropped that idea. At some point, this Ambassador wanted to exclude me from the daily staff meetings. I really took exception to that. In fact, since I was on loan to the Department of Commerce, I called them up and I said, “Look, the Ambassador here wants to cut me, as Commercial Counselor, out of the daily staff meetings; out of the group that discusses the important things that are going on every day.” Well, apparently Commerce got hold of somebody in State and that idea got squashed. Fortunately, not long thereafter, Enders was transferred elsewhere and we got a former Governor of Maine as Ambassador, Larry Curtis, I believe, was his name. He was a very good guy. He was very conscious of and supportive of commercial work. Now, I'm not going to say that Tom Enders did not support me, because as I mentioned before, he did allow the Embassy residence, plus some of his representation money, to be used for our first wine tasting of the Society for American Wines. I don't want to sound like I am condemning him out of hand or anything like that. But, it's just that he had an attitude that was, and I fear still is, widespread in the career Foreign Service among the people who are in the political cone. I just have a feeling that that is the real Aristocracy and us economists and commercial types are just on a lower rung.

Q: Yeah. And they wouldn't want to do in any of their hands owhatever and not get in to the market.

WILLIAMS: That's right, yes. My gosh, to have to mess around with “businessmen” and “manufacturers” and pedestrian people like that. Anyway, maybe that casts a little light on some of the things that go on in the Foreign Service. I did get out to the Consulates and Consulates General just to let them know that somebody was watching and somebody cared. I really wasn't in a position to tell them precisely what to do and how to do it unless

they asked me for some help along these lines. But I did want to let them know that the Embassy was looking to see what they did in the commercial field. That is, either looking for trade opportunities for U.S. firms or investment opportunities or whatever. Any way to increase our trade.

Q: We ought to put in some years in there.

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. We're in '80 and '81. Well, '79,'80 and '81 I'm talking basically. I found it very interesting. I remember when I went out to Vancouver, I thought of the only previous time that I had been in Vancouver which was in 1953 when I was on my way to New Zealand on the Fulbright scholarship. I went from Wilmington, North Carolina to Vancouver by rail. I went up from Wilmington to Montreal and then all across Canada on a Canadian Pacific train. It was in the dead of winter. It was in February of '53 and there was lots of snow. When I got to Vancouver we were out of the snow.

Q: I was going to ask you what you saw. You said you saw snow.

WILLIAMS: Oh man, did I see snow. All the way across. I remember getting out of the train at Winnipeg thinking, we've got maybe an hour stop here and I'll get a chance to see a little bit of Winnipeg. So, I got out of the train and started walking around. My ears almost froze solid in the first five minutes so I turned around and got right back on the train. I thought, I'll see Winnipeg another time. The other time was when I came out to visit as Counselor of Embassy.

Q: What season of the year was that?

WILLIAMS: When I went to Vancouver?

Q: Yes.

WILLIAMS: It was spring, but they were still skiing up on the mountains above the city. I went up there, not to ski, but just to visit the ski place, because I thought I might come back and ski later. But I never did. Anyway, it was very nice weather.

Q: So the main economic or commercial interest there, is it vastldifferent in the western part of Canada from eastern Canada?

WILLIAMS: Well, Vancouver is a major port and there's a lot of stuff shipped in and out of there that is not actually grown in the Province of British Columbia. They are particularly interested in forest products there, whether logs or sawn wood or whatever. That is a major product there. But, then they get a lot of —

Q: Hardwoods as opposed to —

WILLIAMS: Some hardwoods, but mostly conifers, whether pine or fir or whatever. It was a lovely place. I thoroughly enjoyed that part of the job, going around and letting them know that big brother was watching in their commercial work and giving them whatever help I could. A couple of places had new commercial officers —

Q: So, you enjoyed that part, and it was quite lovely.

WILLIAMS: Yes, indeed. I did enjoy Calgary and Winnipeg. Winnipeg is no great garden spot, but I always enjoyed going to Montreal. That's a lovely city. I had some personal friends there too. I always took any excuse to go there. Actually, it was only a hundred miles from Ottawa to Montreal.

Q: I can remember the hard cider. I do remember that.

WILLIAMS: What about the maple syrup there? Go out in the early Spring. Go out to what they call a sugarbush. A place where they tap the trees and get the maple syrup, and where in the early spring they would put on these enormous breakfasts with bacon and

sausage and everything. Lots and lots of freshly made maple syrup on pancakes. Oh man, that was beautiful.

Q: Yeah, I would like that.

WILLIAMS: Quebec City is a lovely place too. When I saw the Plains of Abraham, I thought about how different things might have been if Benedict Arnold had succeeded in his effort to take Quebec in 1775, or early '76. Anyway, that was when he was a General in good standing in the Army of the United States. Benedict Arnold was one of the better Generals that we had, and it was just a shame that that idiot, General Horatio Gates pushed him in the direction of going back to his first loyalty to Britain. It was an interesting period. Just think, suppose we had taken Quebec and suppose instead of thirteen colonies we had been sixteen, and today, we were the United States of North America including Canada. Wouldn't things be different?

Q: That would be something.

WILLIAMS: You know the thing is, the Canadians know so much more about us than we do about them. Of course, that's true for practically every country in the world. But, we are so utterly ignorant of Canada. I must confess that I was ignorant when I went there, and still am, because there's a lot about Canada that I don't know that I should. But most Americans just don't pay much attention to our closest neighbor and biggest trading partner.

Q: I have no comprehension at all. I remember taking the train from Toronto to Montreal and on to Quebec. I do remember the fresh raspberries in Quebec City. That would have been maybe July or August. Probably in July, for the raspberries in Quebec. They were wonderful with real cream.

WILLIAMS: Oh, yes. Not just what passes for cream at your locaFood Lion.

Q: Yes. Yes. Well, the people in that area enjoyed food. Whaabout food at the Embassy or food at homes, social gatherings?

WILLIAMS: At that time since I was a Counselor of Embassy and I had a fairly sizeable apartment rented by the U.S. Government. This was because I had to entertain a good deal. I think I did certainly my share of entertaining, probably more. At that time my wife was not living with me in Ottawa. We did not have any formal separation yet, but although she was living most of the time in Washington, she would come up periodically and stay for a while. I would try tarrange my entertaining so she could be there. I'd give a dinner or something or a reception and she was there. It was an apartment that was big enough to do a good bit of entertaining and I certainly did. As far as the food, it was very good. One advantage I had that I told you about. OurEmbassy on Wellington Street, right across from the Houses of Parliament. Well, right next door to the Embassy was an old and distinguished club, a men's club. Ah! Shock and horror. But, it was a very old traditional club and they had very good meals there. Of course, if one were a diplomat one could join without paying the enormous initiation fees that other less-favored people would have to pay. Another advantage that I had was that I made some very good friends among my colleagues in other Embassies. One was my counterpart from the Spanish Embassy. We still correspond, and I have visited him iSpain. Now he's actually head of their Geneva office, the Spanish Government's Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Geneva. Anyway, we got to be quite good friends. The same was true of my Argentine counterpart. It turned out I had known the Chilean Ambassador when he was the Chilean Ambassador to LAFTA, Latin American Free Trade Association in Montevideo, Ambassador Silva Davidson. We were friends already, so I was immediately welcomed at the Chilean Embassy, to all their major parties and receptions. The European Common Market representative and I got to be very good friends. We could all support each other and help each other. We were all looking at the same thing, trying to overcome Canada's remaining trade restrictions. Canada is not as bad as some countries, but as I mentioned before, they were very clever and very innovative and very efficient in trying to find new and

sneaky ways to protect this or that industry. So, we were all looking at these things and exchanging ideas. There's one thing I suddenly remember now, just from talking about that period. There is one thing that kind of illustrates the difference between the culture of the United States and the Latins. My Spanish friend and I would be walking down the street, going to lunch or coming from lunch. Now, in Spain, and in some Latin American countries, it's the custom for men to link arms when they're walking down the street talking to each other. Just link arms. He would link arms with me and I always felt very uncomfortable with this, but tried not to show it. We just don't do that here, of course.

Q: I do remember that custom.

WILLIAMS: I remember trying my best not to let him see that thimade me a little uncomfortable.

Q: That you wanted to unhook?

WILLIAMS: Yes. I think he didn't realize that that really was, fome, a strange custom.

Q: Yes. I do remember that. I can remember walking with my daughter, 'cause people didn't know that. I was aware of the arm linking. I guess I was more aware of women.

WILLIAMS: I've just never run into that since. Anyway, that wajust a little interesting sidelight on differences in culture.

Q: That was in Ottawa?

WILLIAMS: In Ottawa, yeah.

Q: On the streets of Madrid would be one thing. The streets of Ottawa would be another. I'm thinking about your two comments, that South American friends would have been very grateful for your language, the wonderful language ability in Canada.

WILLIAMS: Most of them did speak pretty good English. Speaking of language ability, that was a good tour of duty for me, for among other reasons, I sort of re-learned French. I had studied French in college for only a year and I never had much occasion, except on short visits to France, to practice the language. But, when I went to Canada, of course, there were news broadcasts and other broadcasts too, at any hour of the day or night in French. So, I used to listen, especially in the morning. I always got the morning news on the French channel on the radio or T.V. So I got to where I could speak French reasonably well. It came in handy. One incident I recall was when the Foreign Ministry was sending a new Consul General to Atlanta. He was a French Canadian. I was invited to his departure lunch. Everybody at the table, including the English Canadians, spoke French because, let me tell you, the Canadian Government was getting really tough on making sure that everybody was at least taking lessons in both languages. There was not so much a problem with the French Canadians, because most of them spoke English, but not very many of the English Canadians, spoke French, so they were the ones who were feeling the pressure. But, anyway, we would be sitting with 16 or 18 people around a lunch table and everybody would be speaking French, so I just had to speak French too. That was a very good experience.

Q: That's amazing. Another question, not necessarily about language. Thinking about all of you from different countries wanting to increase the chances for trade with your own country, between your own country and Canada, how did you keep from being their competitive? How does this work?

WILLIAMS: We did have a sense of being competitive, but I think our collegial interest in breaking down Canadian trade barriers was stronger than any competitiveness unless there happened to be a particular question of a particular product at a particular time. It seldom came up that there was that much competition between us and, say, the European Communities over a particular product at a particular time; so we managed to avoid most of the competitiveness. I'm sure that it was in the background of everybody's thinking. I

think that we felt in the long run the advantages of breaking down Canadian trade barriers would be much greater than worrying about our own specific problems of the moment.

Q: About who got what share of the market?

WILLIAMS: Yes. I think we all were sophisticated enough to realize that you can't predict who's going to get what share of the market. It's hard even to predict in any particular product, much less overall. Lowering trade barriers is to everyone's advantage to some extent. Let's suppose we break down a Canadian trade barrier and we increase our exports for that reason by a hundred million dollars a year and the Europeans increase their exports by two hundred million dollars a year. That doesn't mean we've lost a hundred million dollars. It means that we have just for one reason or another not been able to take as much advantage as the Europeans did. But, there are people who feel that in a situation like that, we have lost. Well, we didn't lose. You see, the problem I have is that going to Yale and getting that M.A. degree in economics destroyed my ability to believe utter nonsense.

Q: Right. I was thinking as you were talking about trade and how it works. How did your formal training and your experience at the post, how did all that fit together and make you a better or worse diplomat?

WILLIAMS: Well, I think it really helped a great deal. At the Embassy in Ottawa, we use to do a lot of purely economic reporting. That is reporting on the state of the Canadian economy and where we thought it was going over the next six months, a year, two years. We did some pretty good work — we had some good economists there. I was not personally involved in writing or drafting up the major economic reports. I contributed to them, because we had other people whose main job was that.My main job was looking out specifically for trade, rather than analyzing the economy. However, I did get a chance to read and clear the reports, so I would make sure that my point of view was reflected in

them, including my thoughts on where the economy was going. This was reflected in the reports. You're familiar with the Conference Board in New York?

Q: Somewhat.

WILLIAMS: They are a think-tank that does economic analysis of the United States economy and the impact of other economies on ours. They use to call us and ask, “What do you guys think?” They were doing their periodic reports. I thought that was pretty good, when the Conference Board calls you instead of you calling the them. I think that indicates that you are doing a pretty good job.

Q: After all, you were in the field, you were there.

WILLIAMS: Yes. I was there and I was contributing to the reports.

Q: But not there just for your health, but because you were doing a good job. You had the theory and the knowledge to go along with the protocol and diplomatic scene.

WILLIAMS: Oh sure. I remember when Larry Curtis, Governor Curtis was the Ambassador there. He use to take me along when he would go to talk to groups of business men or economists or whatever. One time we went down to Pittsburgh — he was making a speech there which I drafted for him. He went over it and made some suggestions, but I basically drafted the speech for him. A lot of the audience were senior American business people in Pittsburgh: CEO's of the major corporations that are based in or have major operations in or around Pittsburgh.

Q: I'm thinking steel or coal?

WILLIAMS: No. It was Pittsburgh Plate Glass, Westinghouse and ... I forget them all now, but they included Bethlehem Steel, not far from Pittsburgh. Curtis really made an effort there to help boost U.S.-Canadian trade or U.S. exports to Canada. He explained to these guys that Canada was the major area where they had a better chance of increasing

exports and what would be the best ways to go about it. He told them that we were there in Ottawa to help, and they should come to us if they needed any assistance, such as getting appointments with the right people in the Canadian government or in Canadian industry and so on. So, I would go around with the Ambassador and back him up on these occasions. While I was in Canada I concluded that I would retire from the Service, take early retirement. I had been in Ottawa a couple of years and I was inquiring around the Department of State as to what my next assignment might be, hoping that I would maybe get a Deputy Chief of Mission job at some Embassy or even maybe an Ambassadorial assignment in some smaller Embassy somewhere, but it became apparent that for whatever reason that the Department of State had no thought of assigning me to such a job.

I had been hoping that my next assignment would not be merely doing once again what I had been doing during this assignment. But that was what they seemed to be thinking about for me, sending me as their economic or commercial counselor to some other Embassy. For a long time I had had in the back of mind the idea of going back to graduate school and get a doctorate and have a second career at teaching. So, eventually I decided that was what I was going to do. Just take early retirement. I had been in close to twenty-seven years. I was calculating that that much time would give me a reasonable pension. So, I decided that was what I would do. I wrote to the Graduate School here at the University of North Carolina, thinking that since I had a Masters Degree from here, there wouldn't be any question about them admitting me to Grad School; but, boy, was I in for a surprise. They said, “You got to take the Graduate Record Examination.” I found the GRE was being given only once more before the date when they had to have my application complete with GRE scores, well before August, 1981, if I was going to be admitted. So, I went over to McGill University and took the GRE on one week's notice. I had no problem with it, (scored about 1250 - nothing exceptional) but still it was an interesting experience.

Q: That's not a lot of notice to cram.

WILLIAMS: No, it's not a lot of notice for the GRE.

Q: It would seem a strange exercise to say the least, I would sait, to have to do that.

WILLIAMS: To have to do that when one already has two Master's Degrees, including one from the University to which one is now applying ... But, when I got those other two degrees I never had to take the GRE. I don't know whether it even existed when I went to graduate school in '51 at Carolina. They didn't even mention it when I was admitted to Yale under the Department of State program.

Q: Yale wouldn't be quite good enough for Carolina? Carolina can'uphold its standards and so forth.

WILLIAMS: So, I did retire out of Ottawa. I retired on a Friday afternoon and on the Monday morning I was registering in Grad School here at Carolina.

Q: That was fast.

WILLIAMS: Well, I arranged it that way so there would not be any major gaps. I had come down previously and rented an apartment and so on. I'd come down actually for my thirtieth class reunion in 1980. I was in the class of 1950. So, in 1980 they had a thirtieth reunion so I came down for that and I started looking around to see which of my old professors might be able to recommend me. There were several still around then. They're gone now I'm afraid, most of them.

Q: As you were leaving Canada and making the shift southward, what were some of your thoughts about leaving and your post there, the good, the bad, any different?

WILLIAMS: The good, the bad and the ugly?

Q: Yeah, all of that.

WILLIAMS: Well, I thought on one hand, it's a pity that I'm not going to have a chance to go forward in the Foreign Service, because I thought I'd really done a terrific job in Auckland as Consul General. I thought I had done certainly as good a job as anyone was likely to do in Ottawa, which as I mentioned, is the capital of our largest trading partner, by far. I was in charge of all U.S. Government commercial activities in Canada, and thought I did a pretty good job. I thought I was ready to do something bigger, and I was disappointed that the Department of State apparently, did not share my opinion. But, on the other hand, I had had a brief stint at teaching before when I was in Grad School in '53-'54, just before I went to work for the government. I'd always thought that it would be really good to get a Ph.D and to teach for a while. So, I thought, that's a new opportunity. In the Foreign Service, I got into the “tour of duty” idea. You serve several years in one place, that's your “tour of duty,” and you move on to another one -something different, something new, something challenging. I figured that this was going to be a challenge, not like any challenge that I had faced before, recently. Yes, of course there was my academic experience during the year at Yale. I think I told you that was my toughest year in the Foreign Service, in one sense at least. But it was a challenge. So, I thought, this is going to be interesting, and indeed it was interesting.

Q: Did it seem tame after your diplomatic assignments? Classrooms can be wonderful and exciting and they can also seem tame and old hat — it depends.

WILLIAMS: No, not really tame, because for a while there, the first couple of years, I was taking a full load of graduate seminars and teaching one course each semester. Sometimes teaching a course in American government and sometimes a course in International Relations and World Politics. I didn't consider it tame, because I would always have a new group of students each time and there were always problems with some of the students. There were problems with some of the professors too, because as you may have noted I am a conservative and I was certainly in a very small minority in the Political Science Department at UNC-Chapel Hill, both among the graduate students and among

the teachers. Of course, I was teaching as a teaching assistant. I was not an adjunct professor. Sometimes people retire from the Foreign Service and they get a job as an adjunct professor of something or other, but that was not what I was doing. I was just like any other grad student, doing my teaching, because if you're a grad student the idea is that you're doing it because you're going to be a teacher and therefore, you need to get practice teaching, and that's part of being a grad student.

Q: But, yet your travel and experience has been so much wider than most of your colleagues. That makes me think of a very liberal sort of experience and a very wide range.

WILLIAMS: That's true. Well, I agree, but the Department of the University didn't take that point of view. As far as they were concerned it really didn't matter a damn what I'd done before. My experience really didn't — well, it mattered only in the sense that they did allow me to teach the course in International Relations and World Politics, but then there were six or eight sections of that course and the others were being taught by grad students in the International Relations part of the Political Science Department. So, really the University here I think was very, very closed-minded or narrow-minded, not taking full advantage of my experience. There are an awful lot of other retired Foreign Service people around here who could bring a wealth of experience to bear in this field and the University just doesn't take advantage of it.

Q: I'm hearing you. I don't know all of it, but I would say yes,that would be quite possible.

WILLIAMS: I want to just maybe to clarify something when I indicated that I was in a minority as a conservative. This is true. This did not really bring me in conflict with most professors, only one. There was one guy that I think really found me to be very disagreeable, although I tried to conceal my feelings for him. I think it was in a theory course, but anyway, I got a lot of honors grades and I got a mere pass from him. I think I deserved more than that, but I think I know why he gave it to me. But, aside from this one

particular professor, I got along with the rest of them reasonably well. I think most of them welcomed a different point of view, and one which had some basis in practical experience. When I decided, after about six years and having finished all of the course work and done the comprehensive written exams for the degree, I decided not to go ahead and spend a year or year and a half on writing my dissertation, because I think the idea of the “tour of duty” had sort of taken over. I thought, well, I've done my tour of duty in teaching now and I was really getting a little bit tired of it. The quality of the students I was getting was not really what I thought a major university of this kind should have. I found that many of the students looked on my courses, whether American government or International Relations in World Politics, looked on this as just a mere building block towards a degree, and they wanted to get as high a grade as possible, doing as little work as possible. If they didn't get at least a B, they would say, “Mr. Williams, why didn't you think I deserved a B on this course?” My answer often was, “First of all, your paper showed evidence that you are hardly literate in English.” At first when I would get term papers or essays, I would go over them and try to correct their English. Then I finally decided, to hell with it. I cannot be both a Political Science teacher and an English teacher.

Q: Or a remedial English teacher.

WILLIAMS: Yes, a remedial English teacher. I could recommend that they go over and take their remedial English, but I couldn't correct all of their English and finish grading papers to get them back to the students on time. I was really amazed, although I guess I shouldn't have been, because — I'm not sure if I've mentioned this before — but actually the major thing that people flunk the Foreign Service exam on is English.

Q: Oh really?

WILLIAMS: Yes. So, maybe I shouldn't have been surprised, but I was. I was disappointed let me say. So, finally I just by chance fell into this business of escort interpreting and that's what I've been doing ever since.

Q: Going back to the students and their mood on campus; the mood in your classroom or department. I'm guessing there was not much in intellectual curiosity among these bright-eyed, bushy tailed grad students.

WILLIAMS: Well, let me put it like this. If I had a section of forty-five students and if there were seven or eight who really wanted to learn the material and were intellectually curious, I would feel that was good. At least there were some. But, if there were seven or eight, that would be about a maximum. The rest of them would sit there like the proverbial bumps on logs and I wouldn't know whether they were absorbing the stuff or not until exam time came. Some time I'll show you some of my exams. I would do multiple choice most of the time, but then some of them would complain about that, so I'd give them some little thing to write. Then some of them would complain that, “Oh no we haven't got time to do any writing if we're going to do all these multiple choices. Some time if you like, I'll show you some of the exams I use to give them. I didn't think they were particularly, certainly not abusively tough. When you're a teaching assistant, you have to be rated periodically by full professors. So, I would have a full professor dropping in and sitting in the back of the class for an hour and rating me. I always got good ratings.

Q: Yes. It's a very unusual system. I'm not sure. I haven't figured it out. I've struggled with some of these notions myself for a long time. I've not figured it out and maybe don't want to, but, anyway you decided to take another tack. There are many ways for us to live as human beings and to have our being. There are many ways to live in this world and contribute to society and there are many ways to use our minds.

WILLIAMS: Well, like I said, I got into this interpreting business by chance. The way it happened was, I think it was in my next-to-last semester, at the end of '85. I'd gotten to know the Director and the Assistant Director of the International Center at the University. They do whatever they can to take care of foreign students and faculty acting as a sort of buffer between them and the rest of the University. To help them with whatever problems they may have and to give them some place to come, somebody to talk to and somebody

to tell their problems to, and so on. They also put on international programs of one kind or another to introduce the rest of the university community to the idea that there are a lot of people from other countries here in our midst, and “Why don't you guys come on over and let's get acquainted.” Anyway, they needed somebody to organize a special program — well, let me back up for a moment. There is an Association of International Student Counselors — that's not exactly the name of it, but its something like that. It's headquartered in Washington. They try to organize seminars of one kind or another around Christmas every year, because school lets out in mid December, (some of them even earlier than that) and it does not resume until a week after New Year. So, there are all these foreign students in the United States who can't afford to go home for the Christmas holidays and they're stuck with nothing to do. So, they try to organize something for them to do. They wanted to organize a two-week series of seminars. They do it at different universities in different years. So, it was UNC's turn that year to host one of these. There were several around the country. They wanted somebody to organize it, and I applied for and got the job. It was a paid job, a consultant job. We had about twenty-five foreign students from all over the east coast. I set up lots and lots of things for them to do. I took them over to Raleigh and we interviewed some people in state government; I took them out to some textile factories down in Chatham County and a furniture factory and showroom over in High Point. I forget what all we did. I got a lot of speakers to come over and speak to them. I had a small budget, so I could give the speakers a small honorarium. I got the Chancellor of North Carolina Central University, since I wanted the students to hear that not everybody is lily white. I took them over to Meredith. I had a friend who was a Vice President of Meredith at that time, and I wanted them to get an idea of a woman's college, as well as an eighty-five percent black college. You know, just to give them an idea of the resources of this area. I took them over to the Research Triangle Park, to the Research Triangle Institute, to the Micro Electronics Center. I thought it was a pretty fine program and indeed, most of them seemed to enjoy it. So, the International Center kept me around for another couple of months doing other consulting jobs. While I was there at the Center we received some foreign visitors accompanied by escort interpreters. So, I

got to talking with these people and asked, what is was all about. They told me, that the Office of Language Services of the Department State in Washington always needs new interpreters. So, I went to Washington, took their exam and passed it, and got on their list of contractors; and that's what I've been doing on a periodic basis ever since.

Q: So that's through the Department of State?

WILLIAMS: Through the Office of Language Services of the Department of State. I am a free-lance interpreter and translator, but the Department of State is my biggest client.

Q: I'm amazed at people's personal journeys. I don't know whether there is supposed to be a big plan with a capital P for any of us or all of us. Generally, I do feel, if we're thinking people that we do what we want to do, we make plans, but you've talked to those people about some of your plans that you wanted to make that didn't ever come about through no fault of your own.

WILLIAMS: Well, I don't know. It might have been some fault of mine that I'm not aware of, but one of these days I'd like to go up to Washington and get into my old personnel file and see what's there.

Q: That would be interesting. Is that an open file?

WILLIAMS: Well, it's not and I might have to go to some trouble to get into it, but it might work for somebody that is retired and who no longer would be able to bring a suit against them. I'm not sure what the status would be, I just would be curious to see whether there is anything in there that somebody might have slipped in that I wasn't told about and was unable to defend myself against, like the Ambassador whom I mentioned who just flat-out lied to get me out of one assignment so he could appoint one of his favorite boys.

Q: That's scary to think about. I'm sure it does happen and obviously did happen. Of all the posts, what were your favorite ones? Maybe I've asked you that before.

WILLIAMS: No, I don't think you did and I've had other people ask me that. I have the greatest difficulty answering, because all my posts were enjoyable in different ways. I suppose professionally the best was probably Auckland, because I was in charge there. Of course with a boss in Wellington to whom I reported in a very general way, but I was in charge in Auckland and that was a good feeling. “I'm the boss here.” I had a very wide range of responsibilities, economic, political, commercial, public affairs, consular, whatever. So, professionally that was a very rewarding experience. Although my responsibilities in Buenos Aires were narrower, I still feel that I did a lot of really good work there. I mean tangibly good. Tangible in terms of dollar exports from the United States which translated into jobs for American workers. I really felt I did a good job there. I was there from '70 to '75, and from about '73 on was when the terrorism really started getting bad. I think I told you about their targeting my deputy.

Q: That's right.

WILLIAMS: I came fairly close to having to shoot one of these terrorists. But, aside from that — you know that old saying, “And aside from that, Mrs. Lincoln, how did you enjoy the performance?” Well, aside from that, I really did enjoy Buenos Aires for a great many reasons, professional and personal. I had a great many friends there and it was really a good period of time.

Q: Cosmopolitan and yet in a different part of the world from Paris.iWILLIAMS: By the way, did I tell you about the first time I was asked to be an interpreter in a formal sense?

Q: I'm trying to think, but tell us again just in case we missed it.

WILLIAMS: O.K. Well, I told you that John Davis Lodge, my first Ambassador there under whom I had also served in Spain, was a terrific linguist. The man just had a natural talent for languages. He spoke excellent Spanish and excellent French. Of course, the people in Buenos Aires got use to having an American Ambassador who spoke very good Spanish.

Then Bob Hill came. Now, Bob was a nice guy, but he was — let me put it like this, he was less than zero at languages. The guy had a mental block or something about Spanish. He just could not seem to learn. But he had a corresponding great respect for anybody who did know the language. Anyway, shortly after Bob Hill arrived, we had a visit from the Special Trade Representative from Washington. The Special Trade Representative from the Executive Office of the President. Of course, this was a big deal for the Argentine government. They had a chance to address and talk to somebody who was really up there in the American trade and economic hierarchy. So, we had this meeting at the Foreign Ministry with the Ambassador, the STR and several members of his team.

Q: Let's take a break.

This is the end of Side 2 and I want to be sure to get all of thstory.

WILLIAMS: So, we were sitting around this table in the Foreign Ministry, I wasn't sitting at the table, I was sitting with my back to the wall. There were a bunch of us, the aides around the periphery and the principals were sitting at the table. There was a guy from the Argentine Ministry of Foreign Relations who was doing the interpreting. It was a hot afternoon and I think everybody who wasn't actually participating was beginning to get a little drowsy, including me. And, all of a sudden I hear my name called. I said, “Oops,” — What we say down South is, “He done got a frog in his throat.” Anyway, I was called upon to move up to the table and start doing the interpreting for this high level group, and wow to be suddenly thrown into something like that —

Q: Say again what group.

WILLIAMS: It was a group of senior Argentine officials. I forget if it was the Minister or Deputy Minister of Foreign Relations, the Minister of Economy, the President of the Central Bank, and a couple of other very senior people. On our side, there was the Special Trade Representative from the Executive Office of the President, the senior man in charge of trade policy in the U.S. government, plus an Assistant Secretary of State, plus our

Ambassador. I forget the specific names. It was a high level group. There I was, all of a sudden having to interpret for this group. I don't recall having any particular problem with it, because after all, it was my field, I knew the vocabulary. I came out of that with somewhat of a feeling of confidence. One result was that, the Ambassador thought I was just the greatest guy in the world for being able to fill in on a moment's notice. Apparently, he felt I had added to the prestige of the Embassy by being able to help in an emergency like that. From then on, he would call me in any time he had a conversation with any senior people in the government, I would get called away from whatever I was doing to go with him and be his interpreter. As I said, that was the first time I'd done interpreting in a formal setting. But, previously, Ambassador Lodge had often had dinner parties. He had this great big horseshoe-shape table for forty-four people. A total of forty-four people around it. He and Francesca would be up at the end of it, at the bottom of the U. He would always make a talk at the end of the dinner, just before we broke up and the ladies retired to the drawing room and the gentlemen retired to the library for brandy and cigars. Whatever the occasion was, he would make some remarks about the occasion. I almost always would be asked to go up and interpret his remarks for him, because he would always be speaking in Spanish, but he would want the English-speaking guests there to know what was being said while it was being said. So, I would interpret from Spanish to English right there. So, people kind of got used to thinking of me as an interpreter. However, even if it was a formal dinner, it was an “informal occasion.” You know what I mean?

Q: So, you got called on?

WILLIAMS: I got called on often to do that kind of thing. I thoughthat might add a little bit of interest.

Q: I'm thinking about different types of personalities, all of us in this world have different types of personalities, even in the diplomatic corps. Like lay-men and lay- women. I think most of us have a perception that diplomats can say anything, can be in any group and be

wonderful and mix, but yet I'm thinking there would be introverts who are in the diplomatic corps.

WILLIAMS: Oh indeed there are.

Q: There are people who are arrogant, maybe.

WILLIAMS: Oh, indeed there are!

Q: Sort of talk to me about the spectrum of — I mean does this change from decade to decade. How was it for you? Just say something about that. That's a fairly global question I realize though. Maybe just address some of it.

WILLIAMS: Well, we like to think of our Foreign Service as being sort of “creme de la creme,” because the examinations are rather difficult. They still are, even though they have been, let's say, as some uncultured people say, “they've been dumbed down.” But, I think as a veteran of the old three-and-a-half-day exam, all of us who took that exam think that we had it a lot tougher than they do nowadays, but then all old people think that these young people nowadays have it so easy compared to us, right?

Q: It sounds as if you did have it rough. I mean it was extremelvigorous in many ways.

WILLIAMS: It was, but I think maybe the oral segment of it is now more important than the written, because with the oral segment well, the orals panel can exercise greater discretion, shall we say to bring into the service people that they feel like they want to bring in or they need politically to bring in, rather than have things judged by this cold numerical figure of a written exam score, on which if you don't make a sufficient number of points, you're out, regardless of how much the Department of State might feel it politically expedient to bring you in. But, the oral is now, I think, a lot more important. I remember when I took my oral it only lasted about an hour. It was a panel of five senior Foreign Service officers. I remember one elderly gentleman who was obviously Southern asked

me, “How would you amend the Constitution of the United States? Could you suggest a couple of amendments?” I said, “Well, you know, we might take something out of the Confederate Constitution such as the line-item veto and a single term of office for the President.” I could see that old guy's face light up. I don't think you could get away with that nowadays.

Q: Did you remember exactly what you said?

WILLIAMS: I don't remember my exact words, but they were something like that. But, anyway nowadays it's a different examination, and they basically decide how many women have to be brought in, how many blacks have to be brought in, how many Hispanics have to be brought in, Asian-Americans, etc., how many of each of these have to be brought in and that's the way it comes out.

Q: So, the old quota system is — I mean it sounds a lot like quota system.

WILLIAMS: The quota system is alive and well! I've heard about some people in the Foreign Service now and I don't know — believe me, I'm not saying that only good old white boys make good Foreign Service Officers. I am not saying that at all. But, its undeniable ... no, the Department of State can deny it, they do deny it I believe ... but it's undeniable to anybody who really knows what is going on, that there IS a quota system and the exams are a way — well, they do filter out a lot of people that shouldn't be there, definitely. Still, I think the percentage of applicants who actually get into the Foreign Service is as low as it always has been. But, whether they are the right people. I guess we won't know for a time. Well, I guess we already know, because it has been going on for a while. But, I think the question that you were asking me was more to comment on the kinds of people we get in the service. Actually, I think the people that came at the time I did, (and I'm not sure whether I'm a good representative of those people or not) but I think in one respect, nowadays, there's much more career planning going on from the very, very beginning of their entry into the Foreign Service. They know what they want to do and

they are always looking for ways to advance their careers. I don't believe that as many people did that in my days. Maybe that's what I did wrong, by not paying attention, not turning down a job that might have been less advantageous to me in the long term than another job. For example, when I went to Argentina, I could have had instead another job in Europe and become one of the “old European hands,” because you had to have, you still have to have a solid base in one of the geographic Bureaus in order to advance really rapidly. You have to be accepted in either the Latin American Bureau or the Near Eastern Bureau or the East Asian-Pacific Bureau or the European Bureau. You've got to be in with the good old boys, and, to a considerable extent now, “good old girl” network. My gosh, Carol Laise was at least as important as any man in making the personnel decisions for Europe. I'm not sure whether all this is a good thing or bad thing. I guess to make careful plans for one's career is certainly not a bad thing, but if that is what is sort of driving you ... again, I'm afraid I'm sounding sort of self righteous here and I don't want to do that but, sometimes I'm afraid some people are tending more to their careers than to what they can do to best advance and serve the interests of the United States.

Q: What I was going to say is, career planning is one thing, but that can bleed in to opportunism quickly and to no one's good. Maybe that's simplistic; I don't know I haven't been there, but that's just a thought.iWILLIAMS: Every month I get the State Department's in-house journal, “State,” and I see new Ambassadorial appointees and I see that many have been in the Foreign Service for eighteen or twenty years. Hardly anybody at my time got to be an Ambassador after being eighteen or twenty years in the Service. It was at least twenty-five and more often thirty. But, nowadays you look and see how they have advanced to this position and you just wonder about it. You really do wonder. I don't know all these people now. I don't know this new crop of young Ambassadors out there, so I don't know how they are as Foreign Service officers or how they established a reputation of being so good that they deserved an Ambassadorial assignment after eighteen years in the Service. I'm not saying they don't deserve it, maybe they do. But, in my time, it would have been an extreme exception to have somebody become an Ambassador after

eighteen years and nowadays it's more the rule than the exception when we're talking of career people, not political appointees. I think most of the people in the Foreign Service do have, shall we say, a healthy ego. I think nowadays they are very much concerned about establishing a network. In fact, I think this has been the case for some time. It certainly was during at least the latter part of my career. People are much more concerned with who the people they are working with and seeing on a daily basis. They're thinking, “Who can help me in the future? Who is going to be in a position to help me, and maybe I can scratch his back if he'll scratch mine or something like that.” So, they're always looking around at everybody else who is working with them. They can just dismiss this person and say, “Well, that person will never be in any position to help so I'm not going to waste any time on him, but this other person over here is a comer.” Actually, I shouldn't be criticizing people for that. I used to tell my students in my classes here, “This is what you should do. Look at the people around you, because here at the University you'll make a lot of friends and some of them will be able to help you in the future. You are establishing contacts now that will last you all of your life. And not only friendships; you might make some enemies too, and you want to be careful who you make an enemy of.” I told them to consider this if they wanted to get ahead. I used to tell them all kinds of things. I told them, “You should all pay close attention in my course on American Government, because American Government affects all of us in so many different ways that I'll bet that those of you who pay close attention, ten years from now will be making at least twenty thousand dollars more a year than those who don't pay close attention.”

Q: Did some of them perk up?

WILLIAMS: I think some of them did. I think they did. But, a lot of them didn't. But the Foreign Service, I think is an elite group. It always has been, in one way or another. At the time that I came in, it was supposed to be an elite group of good old boys from the Northeastern Universities with maybe a few from Stanford and Chicago, but mostly good old boys from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, Williams and Brown and so on. Certainly it is no longer that, because, among other reasons, in the mid '50's an awful lot of people were

laterally transferred into the Foreign Service without having taken the exam. There were people who were already in jobs that had some foreign relations component. A study done by the Wriston Committee at that time recommended that these people be lateraled into the Foreign Service at a grade corresponding to their G.S. Government grade. A lot of us who were in the Foreign Service who had taken the exam fairly recently thought that this was just not fair that people were being brought in as full-pledged FSO's, because, they had gotten promotion after promotion in a system which was an awful lot easier than promotions in the Foreign Service. So they got this advantage of having been promoted fast and then lateraling into positions above those of us who were already in the service through the traditional channels. You see, the idea that many of us had of the Foreign Service was the old idea that a Foreign Service Officer was supposed to be a generalist. Before you're a specialist you're a generalist. You're supposed to be able to take any job in the Foreign Service and do a good job of it no matter what it is. Any job the Foreign Service offers, they're supposed to be able to assign you to this job and you do a good job of it. Well, a lot of these people that came in, most of them in fact, the vast majority of the lateral entrants were specialists, so you could not do that with them. So, we thought this was undermining the Foreign Service, what we thought of as the basic concept of the Foreign Service. You could not take most of these people and put them into another job, and expect them to perform well. So, a lot of us consoled ourselves by saying, “Well, these people are going to be out in a few years anyway because they won't be able to compete.” And, indeed a lot of them did decide later to lateral back in to the G.S. system. But, some of them were very successful also. Anyway, that sort of undermined, if you will, the old concept of the Foreign Service as an elite of people from the Northeastern Colleges who came in by the examination. There have been other ways of lateral entry since then also. Not big groups, but just a steady trickle of people who are in foreign affairs-related jobs in the Department of State or other agencies who decide they want to be career Foreign Service people, so they apply for lateral entry and come in that way. I don't know if that answers your question.

Q: Yes, that's very helpful. I guess the whole idea of personality intrigues me no matter what area. Just review again, just state the different posts and your jobs, because I'm sure I established this as we went through, starting from the first. Just your title. I don't like be hung up on titles, I don't think I am, but just for the record. Just your title and post.

WILLIAMS: When I first went to London I was Third Secretary of Embassy. Maybe I better just review for you the titles in the Foreign Service. These were established at the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and have been like that ever since. At an Embassy you have an Ambassador; then at large Embassies you have a Deputy Chief of Mission who has the title of Minister; that is a traditional title. It used to be that we had Embassies in some countries and legations in others. Legations in smaller, less important countries and Embassies in larger, more important countries; but we abolished that distinction years ago, because we can't insult a little country, we can't insult a Nauru which has twenty thousand inhabitants, by saying they're less important than China or England. So, now they are all Embassies and come to think of it, I'm not sure whether we have one on Naura or not, but certainly on Samoa, yes. Samoa and several of the other little fly specks in the Pacific. It use to be that a Minister could be a Chief of Mission. No longer. A Minister is now the Deputy Chief of Mission at big and medium size Embassies. Then, below Minister you get the rank of Counselor; below Counselor you get First Secretary, Second Secretary, Third Secretary. You get some additional people who are Attaches (that is, attached to the Embassy) and Assistant Attaches. Some countries rank Attaches below even Third Secretaries, but what we do is rank an Attache along with a First Secretary. The Consular area has a different set of ranks, the Consul General, the Consul, and Vice Consul, only these three. That's all the Congress of Vienna allowed. Those are all the ranks. At my first post I started off like all other junior Foreign Service Officers who don't enter laterally. I came in as a Third Secretary of Embassy and also Vice Consul. At that time career Foreign Service people were given the two commissions. One is the Diplomatic Officer, the other is the Consular Officer because the two are different.

Q: This is in London?

WILLIAMS: This is in London. I've still got my exequatur as a Vice Consul in London signed by Her Majesty, in addition to the one you see here on my wall as Consul General in Auckland also signed by Her Majesty. Under diplomatic rules, the Head of State must give a country permission to station a Consular Officer there. They don't have to give permission to station a Diplomatic Officer. Anyway, I was Third Secretary in London then I went to Madrid and very shortly after arriving in Madrid, I was promoted and got the title of Second Secretary of Embassy and also Vice Consul there. After Madrid I came back to the States and of course these titles are not applicable when you're in Washington. I was a Desk Officer, but then I went to Montevideo and by then I had been promoted once again, but I had not been promoted beyond the Second Secretary of Embassy rank yet. So, I was still Second Secretary of Embassy even though my job title there was Deputy Chief of the Economic/Commercial Section. The Chief of which was a First Secretary. Anyway, I was the Second Secretary while I was there, but on the Consular side, my rank had gone up to Consul. I then came back to the United States again. Before, I had been in the Bureau of European Affairs, but this time I was in the Bureau of Economic Affairs, which is now the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs. Then, after I had been there for a while, my title was beefed-up somewhat (I was told it was because I was doing a good job) so I became the Senior Economist in the General Commercial Policy Division of the Office of International Trade in this Bureau. So, that's what I was doing there, I was Senior Economist. In the field of economics, it's a pretty prestigious title to be a Senior Economist. Actually, jump ahead a few years and I was here at Carolina and I remember sitting around the lunch room one time and I happened to get to talking with some of the guys in the Economics Department, professors and associate professors of economics and I told them that I had been the Senior Economist in the International Trade area and they perked up their ears even though they knew I didn't have a PH.D. in the subject, that I only had a Masters, but they were listening to me like I was saying something really important. Obviously, they respected the title as a working economist.

Q: That you really knew what you were talking about.

WILLIAMS: Yes. So, it does have some prestige. Anyway, on leaving Washington after four years, I went to Buenos Aires and there I had a diplomatic title as First Secretary, but informally I was known as the Commercial Attache. We tried to get the job upgraded to Counselor rank, but that was still hanging fire when I left. Anyway, I was First Secretary there, because I had been promoted again. That was my title (I was still a Consul) all during the time I was in Buenos Aires. Then I went to Auckland as Consul General. Actually, I never did any consular work there other than incidentally. I had too many other responsibilities. From there I went to Ottawa as Consular of Embassy, which as I mentioned is the third ranking diplomatic title. That's basically it.

Q: It seems such an enormous amount of responsibility to be any of those posts. What advice do you have for anyone going to Foreign Service now, today, 1995.

WILLIAMS: Look at it very carefully before you go, because there seems to be a general down-grading of our foreign policy. Among all the things that the government has to do, many powerful people, politicians, etc. in Washington on both sides of the political fence seem to be attributing less and less importance to having a career Foreign Service which can carry on the day-to-day relations with other countries. Think it over very carefully, because the idea nowadays seems to be to a greater extent than ever before that I recall, that all these things, foreign relations, ought to be able to be handled them Washington. In this age of e-mail and faxes and so on, why do we need to have people there? Well, let me tell you why we need to have people there. This might serve to indicate to some young people who might potentially want to go into the Foreign Service, what kind of a personality you need to have. I think it is a personality which enables you to get along with people, because to so many people in other countries it is personal relations which count. If they know someone personally, this is infinitely better than receiving lots of e-mail and faxes and telephone conversations with somebody you have never seen and so on. They do value these personal relationships. I think it is very important to cultivate this,

because when you cultivate personal relationships you are not only cultivating friendships for yourself, you are also making friends for the United States, because these people are going to be talking with other people and in any area, whether it is government or academic or whatever, the press, the media abroad, you're going to find lots and lots of people who are contemptuous of the United States, who don't like us for political or other reasons, or Marxist influence or whatever. They just think the United States is very bad. So, the more people we have who are able to say, “But look, I know some Americans and they're not like that, because for example, my friend, Ed Williams, he's not like that.” And, I think there are probably a lot of people in the world who can say that. I hope so.

Q: I would think so.

WILLIAMS: I think it's a dangerous delusion that we can carry on the same kind of relationships by e-mail and fax and sending an Ambassador around to visit every few days or every few weeks or months. You may be able to do it in some areas, for example just a couple of days ago I was talking to Jeanette Hyde who is from North Carolina and she is our Ambassador in Barbados. She is also Ambassador to six other little countries down there in the Caribbean, and she goes around and visits each of them periodically. Maybe for those little countries it doesn't really matter, but we're getting to the point where we seem to be thinking that this can be done in a lot of places in the world, and I don't think it can or should be done widely. We need to have somebody in each country who can carry on personal day-to-day relations with people in these countries, because new problems are always arising. Problems of all kinds, a wide variety of problems whether they are problems involving politics, or policy in general, or trade, or economics, or what do we do in the United Nations. Do you cooperate with us or do we cooperate with you in any one of a number of the United Nations agencies or other international agencies, or what do we do about non-governmental organizations. There are so many things. Oh, and individual problems. Harry Wu goes to China and he gets clapped in jail after the Chinese lure him in by giving him a visa and then they clap him in jail and our Consular guy goes to see him and the government there has been moving him around to different places so he doesn't

get to see him for a week. Giving him what, in this country, we call “diesel therapy.” Have you ever heard that expression?

Q: No, I haven't.

WILLIAMS: Well, they take certain federal prisoners around. They don't want them to talk too much to the press or to lawyers or whatever so they take them from one jail to the next all around the country. They just drive them around to little county jails. I know of one case where there was a guy being held in Edenton, a little county jail in Edenton, North Carolina, because they didn't want him to get to talk to the press. Now, he's out of there and in some other jail. Anyway, they were doing this to Harry Wu and our Consul — you know, we should have called in the Ambassador here. We should have called him in at 3:00 a.m. to the Department and said, “We are very alarmed from what we hear about what is happening there, and we should have immediate Consular access to Mr. Wu.” If you call an Ambassador into the Department of State at 3:00 a.m., you're going to get his attention.

Q: Yeah, and don't be polite about it.

WILLIAMS: Don't be polite about it. I think we're too polite in a lot of ways. Oh, let me just tell you something else. Something just occurred to me that I really thought about a lot when I was going to all of these International meetings of International Economic organizations. I'm not sure if I mentioned this or not, but one thing that was borne in upon me was that we were always sending new people to these groups. New people. People who had never attended a meeting before and didn't really know the history of the organization. Of course, the representatives there from other countries had been to the last five or six meetings, they knew the history and knew what had been happening and they were able to get around us in any number of ways. We were always sending new people there who wanted to establish a reputation as “really good guys” by giving in to some of the demands. So, one new guy would give in at this meeting and two years later

another new guy would concede something else at the next meeting of this organization. So, we were always allowing other countries to take advantage of us in this way, because we would not keep people in these jobs long enough to get really experienced at it.

Q: I've wondered about it as a layman. I don't know much about it, but I've thought, hey, wait a minute that shouldn't be going on, shouldn't be tolerated. Oh my. What do you want to say that I haven't asked? There are many things I haven't asked and many things you could say, but other ideas? I would like for us to review all this and come back at another time if need be. But, what other ideas?

WILLIAMS: Well, I think one of the things that has alarmed me is the intense politicization of foreign policy. In fact, the criminalization of foreign policy disagreements. I think the most flagrant case of this is the Elliott Abrams case, where he was charged as a criminal. Criminal charges were brought against this Assistant Secretary of State, because the members of the other party disagreed basically with our foreign policy and they wanted a victim. They wanted somebody that they could land on with claws and fangs. I think this was just utterly disgraceful, the way it was done. Of course, politics has always played a part, always has and always will play an important part, in deciding U.S. foreign policy. I think most of us tried to put aside our political views and not let them influence us too much with the decisions we were making on a day-to-day basis, or the recommendations we were making. I was talking about decisions, I didn't make many decisions, I made recommendations. For example, I'm not sure if I mentioned this to you or not. Did I ever mention my disagreement with Dow Chemical?

Q: You mentioned something about Dow, but I don't think you told mthat.

WILLIAMS: Well, this gets back to what I was just saying. As a conservative, I'm sure a lot of my liberal friends would say, “Ah, he's all for big business.” And, indeed I am sympathetic in general to the cause of big businesses trying to promote trade and promote their exports and thereby furnish jobs to Americans, but certainly not to the extent that I

will endorse without question something that some big business wants. I remember a time when Carl Gerstacker was the Chairman of Dow, and I almost had my head handed to me on a platter for making a decision which went against his company's interests. That was when I was in the Department of State as Senior Economist in the Commercial Policy Division. But, fortunately my Assistant Secretary backed me up on the recommendation that I had made and Mr. Gerstacker (who just died the other day, I saw in the newspaper, he had retired long since) the Chairman of Dow Chemical had to accept it. I had said the Export-Import Bank would not support this proposed Dow Chemical plant in Chile until they get the Chilean government to reverse themselves on the tariff question. Dow had asked the Chilean government to increase the tariffs on the products of the plant to a very high level, even for other Latin American countries who were fellow members of the Latin American Free Trade Association. I said, “Until tariffs come down for members of the Latin American Free Trade Association, State will not approve an ExIm Bank loan for this operation.” So, Gerstacker called up my Assistant Secretary, Joe Greenwald and said, “Hey, who the devil is this Williams?” Anyway, Joe Greenwald backed me up on it. But, you see, I might have said, “Oh well, gosh, if Dow Chemical wants it, they're a big, multinational company and therefore, they should get it, because I am a conservative and therefore, I am automatically in the pocket of big multinationals.” Well, that's not the way it works. I don't think it works on the other side either. I think most of my colleagues (most of them were liberals or at least a lot more liberal than I am) would probably have done the same kind of thing if the situation was reversed. But now, I'm afraid that things have become more and more politicized to the point where it has me really worried. It's not just a lot of politically-appointed Ambassadors, because I don't object to that. We always have had some percentage of politically-appointed Ambassadors, whether twenty-five percent or thirty-five percent as it is now. I do get a little annoyed when somebody like a former professional football player and former car salesman named Williams is appointed Ambassador to the Bahamas just because he's married to Maxine Waters, Congress person from Los Angeles. I think I mentioned once before that they try to put

some of these people in places where they “can't do much damage.” Well, that's not a good criterion.

Q: You can't do much good either.

WILLIAMS: You can't do much good. On the other hand I have worked for political Ambassadors for whom I had the greatest respect. I mentioned John Davis Lodge. Bob Hill was very good; Larry Curtis was very good. I've got no real basic problem with political Ambassadors, but I do have a problem with the politicization, especially when somebody wants to try to bring criminal indictments against people because of foreign policy disagreements.

Q: I understand. Well, we've covered a whole bunch of bases. know more that we could cover. Anything else?

WILLIAMS: I look back on my Foreign Service career and think, I could have organized it better. Suppose I had thought more about — well, like my then wife used to tell me, “If you thought as much about promoting your own career as you think about promoting Bob Pearson's or Aurelia Brazeal's, you probably would be getting a lot further.” Well, I did take trouble with trying to help promote the careers of some of my junior officers and I'm proud of the way a lot of them have turned out. I keep thinking what could I have done differently that might have landed me in some higher level position, some Ambassadorial position or something like that. I really have a very hard time tracing particular decisions that might have led me in another direction. I'm sure there would have been a way to do it. I enjoyed my Foreign Service career. I think I did some good. I think I served the best interests of the United States to the extent that I could in the jobs that I had. With personal enjoyment and professional satisfaction, even though my professional satisfaction is somewhat tempered by the fact that I did not get to a higher level position. Still, I have no great complaint.

Q: It seems a great deal of wisdom. It takes a certain personalitto know that about oneself. A certain character.

WILLIAMS: One thing that I did not mention before that I think maybe I should. I did talk about the Foreign Service having been a sort of an Old Boys Club of northeastern university types years ago, and that it's become much less that sort of thing. Still, I did notice during a good part of my career a certain feeling about Southerners.

Q: I was going to ask you about that. I didn't really ask earlier when you mentioned the Northeast, because in a way you sort of broke the mold. I don't know what percentage of people had some southern leaning, some roots.

WILLIAMS: Well, we have quite a number of people from the South in now. There were not so many when I first came in, but there were a good many. I remember Sam Lewis, I served with him in the Bureau of European Affairs and he became a very distinguished Ambassador. He was from Texas. The young lady that I sort of took under my wing in Buenos Aires, Aurelia Brazeal, she's from Atlanta. She's now Ambassador to Kenya. There were a good many. It wouldn't do any good to recite a lot of names, but I did sort of get a feeling, almost a subliminal feeling, that a lot of people felt Southerners just weren't quite as bright as others. Nobody ever said anything like that, but sometimes I would get that feeling. People would make little remarks and their tone of voice, “Oh you're from North Carolina?” Actually, there were two Foreign Service officers that I know of from my generation who were from Wilmington, North Carolina. Harry Symmes was the other one. He became an Ambassador, thus sort of countering the idea I just put forth, although he was PNG from Jordan. Declared PNG out of Jordan, because somehow he offended King Hussein by telling the truth about something. I forget what it was. Anyway, I'm sure if anybody from the Foreign Service who might hear me say that, might be able to rattle off a list right off the top of their head of all kind of Southerners who have made it to higher rank in the Foreign Service; but I cannot get over that little feeling that I had for the first fifteen

years or so of my time in the Foreign Service about Southerners being considered just not quite up to it.

Q: That's interesting. I'm glad you're making that comment, havinlived in Baltimore and survived New Jersey.

WILLIAMS: I like that, lived in Baltimore and survived New Jersey.Survived, that's a real compliment.

Q: So, I keep thinking. Who are we? Who was I then? Where am now?

WILLIAMS: A lot of people told me, “You don't really have much of a southern accent.” Well, I suppose I had to suppress it in a way and I think I did. I think even now, probably on this tape, I don't come out as much of a Southerner as many North Carolinians would, but boy, I can get right back in to it when I have to, I tell you. When I go home to Wilmington — well, actually I talk just about like anybody else down there. Then, I do the same thing in Spanish. If I'm with a Spaniard from Spain, pretty soon I will be in my Madrid accent. If I'm with somebody from South America I will be in my River Plate accent. So, I sort of tend to adapt.

Q: It's a function of you having traveled widely, studied widely and loved the languages and been good at all of them. That's amazing to think about. It's been a real good time and we may want to pick up some points. Thank you very much for the time and any other ideas.

WILLIAMS: Well, it's been fun. Actually, I enjoyed very much goinback over the tapes of our earlier conversations.

Q: We'll review those and thank you very much. You didn't have tdo this, you didn't have to go in to it all.

WILLIAMS: Well, I've enjoyed it. I tell you what. I'm enjoying very much, I don't know whether or not this has much to do with Foreign Service or whether it's my total career that's more of interest. I don't know if I commented much on what I am doing now, that is, the escort-interpreting. I really think that I'm doing some good here. Because, I am escorting these official visitors around the country. These people are invited by the United States under what we call leader grants. They are leaders in lots of different fields. It could be government, but it doesn't have to be. It could be business, it could be the arts; or the sciences; or the media, universities, whatever. It could be policemen or military people. But when I escort an individual or maybe just a couple of guys around the country, I'm usually with them for a month and you get to know somebody in a month. You spend all day, practically every day with them and you really get to know them and they get to know you. I think I've been able to make some friends for the United States and for myself in that way. Some people seem to think this is just a vacation for these people but it isn't. They come here and they are programmed for a number of visits to different cities around the country. They go to cities where there are institutions or individuals of professional interest to them and they sit down and have discussions with these people. Sometime one-on-one and sometimes a round table. They send me along, because most of these guys need an interpreter. So, I sit there and I interpret back and forth and I learn something. I'm always learning something. That's the fascinating part of it. They are working during the month that they are here. Sometimes it is only three weeks, but usually more often a month, and they are learning things. They are acquiring contacts that they will be able to use from now on in their professional fields. So, I think this is a very valuable program, the International Visitor Program which is run by the U.S. Information Agency. I think one of the more valuable things we can do with our Foreign Affairs budget money is to bring these people here. I used to pick out people to come on these programs. I used to send them here. Now I'm receiving them. But I used to pick out people, not people that we wanted to reward for being faithful friends to the United States, but people that maybe had some doubts about the United States. I thought if this person spends some time in the United States he'll learn what we're really like and get to know us personally as Americans, as well as acquire

some valuable information in his professional field and be able to relate that professional field in his country to that professional field in the United States. I think it's been a very, very valuable program.

Q: That does seem remarkable and also seems — you are an Ambassador, you can do this work now and do it so well because of your service and because of your knowledge and wisdom. It's extremely important and really quite wonderful.

WILLIAMS: Well, I enjoy it. And, as long as I enjoy it I'll keep doing it. Well, the amount of money while it's not negligible it's certainly not a major incentive, let's say, to do it. In other words, if I didn't enjoy each and every time, I just wouldn't do it anymore.

Q: But, it seems remarkable that you are doing this and it really is quite a logical extension of your interest, your work and is extremely important.

WILLIAMS: Oh, I just thought of something. I'm always finding old friends from previous places suddenly show up in Washington. I was just looking at the latest diplomatic list and I found an old friend of mine from my days in Montevideo who then was in the Brazilian delegation there, and he is now Brazilian Ambassador in Washington. So, now that I know that, next time I go to Washington I'm going to look him up. His name is Paulo Turso Flecha de Lima.

Q: I was going to ask you to spell it, but —

WILLIAMS: “Paul-of-Tarsus.” We got to be pretty good friends bacthen.

Q: You can't go wrong with Paul of Tarsus I'm sure. I guess it's remarkable and you can make these judgements, although the people in Foreign Service now cannot, because they don't know enough. To be able to understand the changes in the different countries, over time, and that's just extremely important. I mean most politicians don't know that and

maybe don't want to know that because they don't have the ability to learn that or don't care.

WILLIAMS: That's true. Most of them really don't care much. They have no basis or knowledge about it. Maybe they have taken a course similar to the one I use to teach at a University, but don't remember too much about it. Most politicians knowledge of foreign affairs is just very, very limited and I'm not sure who they're listening to. I beg your pardon, I should say, “To whom they are listening?”Q: Winston Churchill would say, “That's a pedantry up with which I will not put.”

WILLIAMS: Exactly. Or, as the Elector of Saxony said to the Elector of Brandenburg, “The peasants are revolting.” The reply was, “Yes, I have always found them so.” Anyway, foreign affairs is not something that is so strange and unusual that only the initiated can understand it. But you do have to dedicate a little time and effort to reading about what is going on so you can make sense of what is happening in the news every day. For example, I'm not sure that I can make much sense out of what is going on in Yugoslavia, the former Yugoslavia.

He called and asked me, “Ed, just what do you make of all this stuff that is going on over there in Yugoslavia and Bosnia and all that?” Well, I started to dredge things up out of my memory, both from what I had studied in college as a background and then what's been going on since then that I've paid attention to. I'm not sure if I managed to make any sense out of it for him, but I was surprised at the amount of stuff that did come to the surface from the background of what I knew. By the way, I must say, as a stamp collector, I am probably one of the few people that had ever heard of Bosnia-Herzegovina before all of this started, because there were stamps from Bosnia-Herzegovina deCades ago. Anybody that started collecting stamps at the age of eight, as I did, would have heard of it. But this guy was at a complete loss to understand what was going on, and yet he wanted to, not because he's in politics or anything — well only to a limited degree in state and local politics — he was just curious. There is so much going on, and he just thought that I could

shed some light on it. Maybe I did succeed in shedding a little light on it and certainly, it sort of helped me get my own thoughts in order. There's nothing like having to speak on a certain subject to get your thinking organized and get your memory working. At least I always found that to be the case. I certainly learned an awful lot while drafting speeches to make to different groups here and there. I learned a lot too by teaching courses at Carolina. Every time I taught the course in American Government - and I taught it time after time - every time I would learn something that I didn't know before.

Q: That's an exciting thing about working your way through politics. The creativity was a source that was needed and is a good thing.

WILLIAMS: Oh yes. Foreign policy is looked on by many as being a very arcane subject that only the initiated can understand. Well, that's nonsense. All you need is to be able to do some selective reading and do it in a kind of organized way. Although, even that is not strictly necessary. If you read what's going on every day in the Wall Street Journal or the New York Times, or maybe balance the New York Times with the Washington Times, you can learn an awful lot about what's going on in the world. You will get some insight into it. Although, I'm afraid my opinion of most journalists who write on foreign affairs is that their knowledge — well, it's kind of like somebody used to say about the Platte River. Do you remember that expression? A mile wide and an inch deep. With some notable exceptions like Georgie Ann Geyer. Do you read her columns?

Q: No, not enough.

WILLIAMS: Oh, she's terrific. She's very good. She knows the history and the background of whatever she writes on. I wish there were more like her, rather than people like Richard Reeves and Mollie Ivins, who know not, and know not that they know not.

Q: The Biblical way is absolutely the best. There's no better wato say that.

WILLIAMS: I'm not sure what else I can say in the general area of Foreign Affairs that would be of interest to anyone. Around here, I would have really enjoyed being taken advantage of more, say by the University or whoever. When I was first here, when I was around the campus every day, I would occasionally get invited to talk to groups of young people who, in September or October every year, are thinking about their careers and where they want to work when they graduate in the Spring. They would have seminars or round tables with a group of people from the foreign affairs community and I would be invited to those or invited to talk to the United Nations Association. Once, I was invited to give a paper at the Carolina Symposium. I gave a paper on “Transfer of Technology from Developed Countries to Less Developed Countries,” which I thought was a rather good paper. But I attracted forty-five people, while Harlan Ellison, the science fiction writer and movie producer, filled Memorial Hall.

Q: I wonder about us as a country. I get very, very worried about different systems, especially the academic system, sometimes the medical system, the political system. I don't know, I just get very worried.

WILLIAMS: So do I.

Q: We will close, although we haven't solved it or perhaps eveposing some of the questions is the best that one could do.

WILLIAMS: Well, I keep thinking, you asked me earlier what advice I would have for young people who are interested in going into the Foreign Service and I said, “Take a close look at it.” Maybe I ought to make my advice a little more specific. I would advise young people who are interested in a foreign affairs career to try their best to get some kind of an intern assignment in Washington during the summer of their junior year, or something similar. Or, if they're going to grad school, maybe the summer between their senior year and grad school. Get an intern assignment in some Congressman's office or in some Foundation's office or something like that. Some way to get to Washington so they can network with

some other similar people — people who are considering that kind of career — so they can get to know what's really going on up there. They won't really get to know what's going on in that short a time, but they'll get a better idea than if they sit around, or spend their time making hamburgers at the local Burger King. Be the Student Prince, rather than the Burger King. That's one piece of advice that I would have for young people. Another is, to talk to as many people as possible who have had careers in Foreign Affairs, whether in the Foreign Service, or in any of the Foreign Affairs Agencies, which include Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, AID, USIA, CIA, whatever. Just talk to people. Talk to as a wide a variety of people and get their viewpoints on what it's like or what it used to be like when they were in the service. Or, talk to people who are or were in International business. We got a lot of people around here in Fearrington who were in international business. Or people who were reporters abroad, or whatever. People who taught in American schools abroad. There are a lot of people with foreign experience of one kind or another who could have some illuminating remarks to make on what kind of a career you can have that has a foreign component to it.

Q: That would be extremely important and critical.

WILLIAMS: Yes. I think young people who want to talk to such people can always ask around, ask their professors, or ask family friends. Their parents would undoubtedly know somebody who has been abroad or who has worked abroad or had something to do with international business or media or government or whatever. So, I would certainly advise taking advantage of as many contacts and talking to as many people as possible. Let them know what you are interested in doing, because those people may remember it later on. If some young person who is the nephew or a son or daughter of somebody you know, some friend of yours, comes to you and says, “Hey, could you tell me something about this kind of career?” You'll probably remember the kid. And, later on you may come across something of interest, some opportunity, and you'll let your friend know that his son or daughter may be interested in this.

Q: Yes. That sounds very good. I worry when young people, don't know and don't want to know or don't want to ask for some reason or whatever. Well, maybe we should wind it up and if we think of other things, we can even include those on another day. Thank you so very much.

End of interview